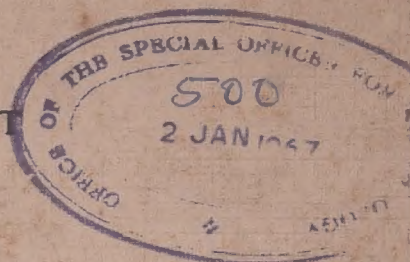


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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERIES
No. 8



THE TUNDI COPPER PLATE GRANT OF VISHNUKUNDIN KING VIKRAMENDRAVARMA

By
Dr. R. SUBRAHMANYAM, M.A., Ph.D.,
Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of India, Madras.

General Editor :
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Joint Secretary to Government (P. W. D.)
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PREFACE

The fall of the imperial *Śātavāhana* Dynasty in the first quarter of the third century A. D. led to the rise of numerous petty and independent principalities in coastal Andhra. Hardly a hundred years later, the Krishna-Godavari doab became a veritable warring ground for the leaders of these petty dynasties who vied with each other for the establishment of paramountcy. Neighbouring kingdoms which were also eagerly awaiting for an opportunity to extend their influence into this fertile area did not let go a favourable chance.

Of these dynasties, the *Ikṣvaku*, the *Bṛīhatphalāyanas*, the *Vasīṣṭas*, the *Ānandagōtrin* kings, the *Viṣṇukunḍins*, and the *Pallavas* figure prominently. Precious little is known about their achievements except the stray reference made in their copper plate inscriptions discovered in this area. Naturally a succinct chronological account of many of these petty dynasties could not be made available to the scholarly world so far. More and more new information has been coming out, thanks to the discoveries of new copper plate inscriptions and the growing historical sense amongst masses in Andhra in the post-independence period.

Naturally a revaluation of the known material about these dynasties in the light of new discoveries is felt necessary. One such discovery is the *Tunḍi* plates of *Viṣṇukunḍin-Vikramēndra Varman* which forms the subject matter of this small booklet. Though the inscription has very little to contribute to the known history of *Viṣṇukunḍins* its provenance and date rendered it possible to discuss afresh the chronology and genealogy of the *Viṣṇukunḍins*.

Incidentally opportunity was also taken by me to depict the dynastic history of the *Viṣṇukunḍins* and the significant role played by them in the re-establishment of *Vaidika Dharma* besides pointing out their contributions for architecture and numismatics in Andhra.

I have dedicated this work to *Jagadguru Śrī Śankarachārya of Śrī Kānchi Kāmakoṭi Pīṭham* in my individual capacity, as a mark of my profound respects to His Holiness. I am deeply grateful, to His Holiness for having so kindly accepted this dedication of mine.

I express my gratitude to the Government of Andhra Pradesh and particularly to Shri N. Ramesan, M.A., I.A.S., Director of Archaeology, Hyderabad for publishing this booklet.

Madras - 9,
15th February 1962.

R. Subrahmanyam

FOREWORD

The present publication by Dr. R. Subrahmanyam, M.A., Ph.D., Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of India, Madras, is about the Tundi plates of the *Viṣṇukunḍin* king *Vikramēndravarma*. The author has taken this opportunity to discuss the genealogy and chronology of the *Viṣṇukunḍin* monarchs. He has also given at the end of the book full details of all other known copper plate grants of *Viṣṇukunḍin* kings and a very valuable appendix on the several *yajñas* like *Aśvamēdha*, *Purushamēdha*, *Vajpēya* etc. He has also added an appendix on the *Viṣṇukunḍin* coins.

Dr. R. Subrahmanyam, M.A., Ph.D., is well-known in Andhra as a scholar in history. He was till recently engaged in the monumental excavations at *Nagarjunakoṇḍa*, undertaken by the Archaeological Survey of India. This pamphlet from his pen is an useful addition to the *Viṣṇukunḍin* history and will be widely welcomed by all students and scholars. I express my gratitude and thanks to Dr. R. Subrahmanyam for the trouble he has undertaken to prepare this pamphlet for the Department of Archaeology, Government of Andhra Pradesh.

The Ajanta Printers, who have been printing a number of our publications, have, as usual with them, done the printing in an exemplary manner and my thanks are due to them for it.

15-2-1962

N. Ramesan

Dedicated to
Jagadguru Śrī Chandrasēkharēndra Saraswati Swāmi
of
Śrī Kānchi Kāma Kōti Pīṭham
as a mark of my profound respects to His Holiness

12. 
15/2/62

CONTENTS

<i>Tuṇḍi</i> Plates of <i>Vikramēndra Bhaṭṭāraka Varman</i>	..	..	1
Appendix—I .. .. .	..	..	26
Appendix—II .. .. .	..	..	27
Appendix—III .. .. .	..	..	41
Appendix—IV .. .. .	..	..	45

LIST OF PLATES

Plate I—A	<i>Tuṇḍi</i> Plates of <i>Vikramēndra Bhaṭṭāraka Varma</i>	I (b) II (a) II (b)
Plate I—B	<i>Tuṇḍi</i> Plates of <i>Vikramēndra Bhaṭṭāraka Varma</i>	III (a), III (b), IV (a)
Plate I—C	<i>Tuṇḍi</i> Plates of <i>Vikramēndra Bhaṭṭāraka Varma</i>	IV (b), V (a), V (b)
Plate II	Figure A Enlarged representation of the symbols on the coin Figure B Seal of <i>Mādhavavarma</i>	
Plate III	Triple Shrined rock-cut <i>Śiva</i> Temple, <i>Mogalrajapuram</i> , Krishna Dt.	
Plate IV	Rock-cut <i>Durga</i> Temple, <i>Mogalrajapuram</i> , Krishna Dt.	
Plate V	<i>Viṣṇukundin</i> Coins	

TUNḌI PLATES OF VIṢṆUKUNḌIN VIKRAMĒNDRA BHATṬĀRAKA VARMA

This set of five copper plates¹ fastened together by means of a ring both ends of which were secured in a circular seal was accidentally discovered by Sri Boppana Narasimhamurti garu, landlord, Kandulapalem village while digging in his field for *pāṭi* earth. Kandulapalem is a small village situated near *Drākṣārāma*, the famous Saivite centre in Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh. These plates were later obtained by Vidwan Sri D. Venkataramanasastri garu, Department of Telugu, Andhra University, Waltair who was pleased to pass them on to me for decipherment and publication early in 1950. There has been inordinate delay in the publication of these inscriptions for which I express my regrets. The discovery of the plates was reported by me to the Government Epigraphist and the same has been noticed by the Government Epigraphist in his Annual Report².

The plates are small in size and compare very well in every respect with the *Ipuru* plates of *Mādhavavarma*, already noticed and published³. The first plate measures 6.2" × 1.7", the second 6" × 1.65", the third 6.4" × 1.725", the fourth 6.4" × 1.75" and the fifth 5.95" × 1.75". The plates without the ring and seal weigh 38.5 tolas. The ring 0.3" thick has a diameter of 2.5" and runs through a hole, 0.45" in diameter. The seal with ring weighs 18 tolas. The inscription is very well preserved except for the last line (line 35), and it begins on the second side of the first plate with four lines of writing on each plate. The letters are deeply incised and though the ends of the plates were not raised into rims, the inscription is in a state of perfect preservation. The second side of the fifth plate betrays the attempts at defacement of the inscription perhaps by later people; luckily no serious damage was however caused to the record. Only six or seven letters containing the name of the scribe were obliterated. On the second side of the 4th plate below line 28, there are six letters which were perhaps omitted by the scribe while engraving the record by mistake and who inserted them later after completely engraving the text, as the palaeography of the inserted letters would suggest. Indications of the attempts made to number the leaves or pages of this record serially are also not wanting. At the right hand corner of the first

-
1. The original set was misplaced by me while transferring my personal effects and it was subsequently found lost. The inscription is being deciphered and edited from the impressions taken by me earlier.
 2. Indian Archaeology - A Review, 1957-58.
 3. Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XVII, p. 33.

plate near the hole for inserting the ring we have the numerical symbol 1 while at the same place on plate III we have numerical symbol 3. The other plates, however, are not numbered. The seal of the plates¹ is circular and seems to bear some legend and representation of some animal-bull or lion (?), - on its counter-sunk surface. In view of its completely obliterated condition it was not possible for me to decipher the legend or identify the animal.

The inscription runs for 35 lines, and excepting for the two imprecatory and benedictory verses at the end, it is all in prose. The regnal year of the king (*Samvatsara*) is denoted by numerals in ligatures 10 and 4, as is generally done in the records of this period, while the actual day on which the grant was made as well as the part of the season of the year and *Pakṣa* are mentioned in words.

About the orthographical peculiarities of the grant the following points deserve mention. This is perhaps one of the few inscriptions that are found engraved without faults. *Sandhi* and *Samāsa* rules have been very carefully observed. Doubling of the consonants, when they preceded 'ra' have been followed as a rule. Except for few scribal errors like marking a vertical line in places of *Visarga*, interchange of the letters 'da' and 'dha', dropping of *ā mātras* in words like *Yajinah*, *Medhavapta* (line 3), *Svarajyasya* (line 4) *Viniryyapita* (line 19), writing of the letter 'Va' instead of 'Da' *Dāyavasya* (line 15), the inscription can be said to be faultless.

The record commences with a long *Praśasti* of the *Viṣṇukunḍin* family (line 1 to 24) and three generations in the pedigree of the donor are given. The great grandfather of the donor *Mahārāja Śrī Mādhava Varma* has been described as a worshipper at the feet of *Śrīparvata-Svāmi* (*Bhagavacchripārvata Svāmi Pādānudhyātaḥ*). He is said to have performed eleven *Asvamēdhas*, and took his 'purificatory' bath thereby cleansing the 'kalmaṣa' of the world in this *Kali* age (*Avabhṛithā-vadhauta-jagat-kalmaṣasya*). He is also said to have performed one thousand *Agniṣṭomas* (*Kratusahasrayājīnah*), eleven *bahusuvarṇas*, eleven *Paunḍarikas* (by which he acquired the occult power of achieving anything he desired - 'prāptasarvārthah' etc.) and a *Puruṣamēdha* besides numerous other sacrifices by which he became a *Paramēṣṭhi* and *Dēvādideva*. His son *Vikramēndra Bhaṭṭārakavarma* is described as an ornament to the family of *Viṣṇukunḍins* and *Vakāṭakas* (whose offspring he is) and by virtue of his valour he demanded submission of *Sāmantas* or subordinate chiefs who bowed at his feet thereby making his feet glow in the lustre of the crest jewels fitted into their head-dresses. His son *Indravarma* has been described as a valorous person who, by dint of his valour not only upheld the position and prestige of the family but also took

1. The *Chikkulla* plates of *Vikramēndrabhaṭṭāraka Varma* son of *Indrabhaṭṭāraka Varma*, who appears to be identical with the donor of the record under review, has a circular seal measuring 1.3/8" in diameter bearing in relief on a slightly countersunk surface a well executed lion which stands to the proper right, raises the right forepaw, opens the mouth, and apparently has a double tail,—Dr. Keilhorn Ep. Ind., Vol., IV., p. 193 ff.

part in a number of battles in which he obtained victory (*Anēkacāturddantasamarasaṅghaṭṭa vijayinah*). He is said to have overcome all his rival claimants (*dāyādah*) to the throne and kingdom. The phraseology in the record *Māṭṭitrasta-Kāṇḍisibhūta Viśirṇṇa pra naṣṭā-seṣa dāyādasya* is very interesting. If we are to believe the assertion made in the epigraph on behalf of this king, he is said to have driven some of his *Dāyādins* into the laps of their mothers (considering them as infants); few he drove to far off regions, while others he had completely annihilated. This seems to imply that *Indravarma's* succession to the kingdom and throne of the *Viṣṇukunḍins* was not a peaceful one and he had to fight his way to the throne braving a war of succession. He has been described as a *Parama Māhēśvara* and *Parama Brāhmaṇya* and as an establisher of a number of *Ghaṭikas* or *Brāhmaṇa 'Agrahāras'* or seats of learning. He has been described as a *Dharma Vijayin*, or one who had conquered numerous countries just to proclaim his prowess but allowed the vanquished rulers to rule over their respective territories without annexing them to his own. His son, the donor of the grant *Vikramēndra Bhaṭṭāraka Varma* is mentioned as the crest jewel (*cūḍamāṇi*) of the family of *Viṣṇukunḍins*, a great warrior unrivalled in personal strength and prowess like *Hara*, possessed of all the noble qualities (*Mahāniyaguṇāh*) and a veritable *Mahēndra* of the earth (*Mahīmahēndrah*).

The record registers the order of *Mahārāja Vikramēndra Bhaṭṭāraka Varma* donating the village *Tunḍi* located on the bank of *Cheyzeru* (*Ceyyerakarē*) and belonging to the king, exempting it from all taxes (*Sarvabādhāparihārēṇa*) to the *Brāhmaṇa Swāmi Śarma* son of *Rudrasarma* belonging to *Kaunḍīnyasagōtra* and *Āpastamba Sūtra* and a resident of *Āki*. The king himself is said to be the *ājñapti* or the executor of the grant (*Svamukhamēva*). It is dated on the 1st day (*Pratipad*) of the *Griṣma pakṣa* in the 14th regnal year of the king. *Griṣma* or summer season starts during the months of *Jyēṣṭha* and *Aṣāḍha*, that is, from the middle of May to the middle of July. The first day of the first *Pakṣa* of the *Griṣma* should therefore have to be dated sometime in the middle of May. The purpose for which this grant was made is not specifically mentioned but from the circumstantial evidence, viz., the issue of the order from the army camp (*chamūpura*) renders it possible to presume that the king might have made this gift for the success of his arms.

At the end of the record usual imprecations of sins that would befall to the violators of this sacred gift of land (*Bhūmiharatah Śasanāṅkitam*) and the *Vyāsagīta* which extols the merits that would occur to the donors of pious gifts of land and to those that maintain such gifts without violations are enumerated.

The village *Tunḍi*, which was gifted by *Mahārāja Vikramēndrabhaṭṭāraka Varma*, appears to be modern *Tuni* in the East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh, while *Āki* the place from where the donee hailed might be the ancient name of *Ākivīḍu* another village in the West Godavari District.

Vikramēndravarma-II, the donor of the grant under review is known to us from another copper plate grant discovered in Godavari District dated in the 10th regnal year, and issued from *Lendulūruvāsaka*, i.e., modern *Dendulūru* near *Pedavēgi* of West Godavari District, recording the King's dedication of a village to Lord *Somagiriśvaranātha*. But the script of that record is of a more developed variety, and Dr. Kielhorn who edited that record, based on the style of the inscriptions and the employment of numerical symbols to denote the date, assigned it to the end of 8th century A.D. It is, however, difficult to accept this dating of Dr. Kielhorn.

TEXT 1

FIRST PLATE, SECOND SIDE

1. *Svasti Bhagavacchriparvvatasvāmi Pādānuddhyātasya Viṣṇukunḍinā(m)* ²
2. *Ēkādasāśvamēdhāvabhṛitāvadhauta-jagat-kalma*
3. *Śasya-kratusahasra-yajinah* ³ *Sarvvamedh-avapta-sarvvabhūta* ⁴
4. *Svārājyasya-bahusuvarṇṇaikādasakayāiina(h)*

SECOND PLATE, FIRST SIDE

5. *Ēkādasā paunḍarika prāptasarvvārddhah yadhavidyanu*
6. *Śthita-rājasya yōpapādit-ādhirjāyasya tada*
7. *nu puruṣamēdhādyaseśakratvanuṣṭhānājani*
8. *taparamēṣṭhyasya dēvātīdēvasya mahārāja*

SECOND PLATE, SECOND SIDE

9. *Śrī Mādhavavarmmanah priyasunōrvviṣṇukunḍivā*
10. *kāṭaka-vaṃsa-dvay-ālankṛita-janmanā(h) pratāpō*
11. *panata-sakala-sāmanta-manjarī-pinjarita*
12. *carāṇa-kamala-yugaḷasya mahārāja*

THIRD PLATE, FIRST SIDE

13. *Śrī Vikramēndra bhaṭṭārakavarmmanah priyassunōr vviṣṇukunḍi*
14. *kulatilakasya samāghrāta-māṭrītrasta kāndi*
15. *sībhūta-visirṇṇa-pranaṣṭāśēśadāyavasya* ⁵ *sva*
16. *dakṣiṇaikabāhu-sahāyyōccaurnītasvayamsakramāga*

1. From the impressions.

2. At the end of the line the sign appears to denote final 'm'.

3. Read *Yājinaḥ*.

4. Read *Mēdhāvāpta*, the meaning of the passage is not quite intelligible.

5. Read *dāyādasya*

THIRD PLATE, SECOND SIDE

17. *t-ādhirā jyasya-Anēkakāturddanta-samara-sanghaṭṭa-vijayina*
18. *paramamāhēsvarasya-parama-brāhmaṇasya Yathāvidhi*
19. *viniryyapita¹ ghaṭṭik-āvāpta punya samcayasya*
20. *Dharma vijayinō-mahārāiēndra bhaṭṭāarakavarmmaṇa (h)*

FOURTH PLATE, FIRST SIDE

21. *priyaputra (h) Śrī Viṣṇukunḍy-ānvaya makuṭa cūlāmaṇi*
22. *Hara iv-āpratihataprabhāva (h)-sakala bhuvanarakṣā*
23. *bharaikāśraya (h) mahanīyaguṇō-ma*
24. *hīmāhēndrah Vikramēndra-bhaṭṭāarakavarmma cyeyyerakarē*

FOURTH PLATE, SECOND SIDE

25. *Tūṇḍi nāmadhēya gramēyakā y (n) ēvam-ājñāpaya*
26. *ti yath-asmin Ākivāstavyāya kaunḍinya-*
27. *sa gōtrāya Āpastamba sūtra pāra (m) gatāya*
28. *Rudrasarmmaṇah putrāya svāmīśarmmaṇē Tūṇḍi gram.*
- 28a. *camūpurapa (sca ?)*

FIFTH PLATE, FIRST SIDE

29. *ōsmabhir-ddatta (n) sarvva bādḥāparihārēṇa datta Ityāṣā jñā*
30. *pana Ājñaptasvamukham-ēva imānica-pātākani*
31. *vilēpayan Vighnatām māṭṛigōvipra-bālayō-*
32. *ṣi-tapasvinah-yāgatih sābhavēt-vṛitti harataṇ sāsanaśkitā*

FIFTH PLATE, SECOND SIDE

33. *Bahubhir-vvasudhā-dattā bahubhiscānupālītā*
34. *yasya-yasya-yadābhūmi-tasyatasya tadāphalam*
35. *saṃva 10-4 pratipadi*

Despite recent attempts of numerous scholars at estalishing a convincing chronology and genealogy of the *Viṣṇukunḍins* a number of problems, particularly the origins of *Viṣṇukunḍins*, their early home and exact dominions over which they held sway, and the final extinction of their power etc., are still matters of conjecture and awaiting further investigation in the light of recent discoveries. A brief resume of the achievement of the *Viṣṇukunḍin* dynasty, their genealogy and chronology etc., may not therefore, be out of place here.

1. Read *viniryyapita*

The origins of the family of *Viṣṇukunḍins* is shrouded in mystery like that of many other dynasties that ruled over *Āndhra*. Nothing is known about the founder of the dynasty. So far, only six copper plate records and one stone inscription pertaining to this dynasty have been discovered. They supply us some interesting data about the different rulers of this family, their achievements, the sacrifices performed by them, their relations marital and otherwise, with the contemporary ruling dynasties etc., besides the benefactions made by them in favour of learned brahmins and temples for which these records were obviously meant. The provenance of the records so far discovered would indicate that their dominion extended over the modern *Visākhaṭṭam*, the two *Godāvaris*, *Kṛṣṇa* and *Guntūr* Districts, though it is difficult to fix exactly their original home or their capital. The copper plates referred to above have been issued from different places. The *Chikkulla* plates¹ were issued from *Vijaya Lendulūru Vāsaka* which had been identified by Sri Jayanti Ramayya Pantulu with Denduluru, a small and insignificant village near Ellore in West Godavari District. The *Rāmatīrtham* plates² were issued from '*Puranisamgama Vāsaka*' while the *Ipūr* plates³ refer to *Amarapura*, as the seat of the king. The *Pulombūru*⁴ and *Tuṇḍi* plates were issued from army camps or while the king was marching with his armies (*Prāgdigjigīṣayā Prasthitah* etc.). The name *Viṣṇukunḍi* however seems to suggest that they were originally people of the area round about *Vinukonḍa* in Guntur District⁵. Their affiliations to *Śrīparvatasvāmi*⁶ i.e., Lord *Mallikārjuna* of *Śrīsailam*, which is not away from *Vinukonḍa* lends further support to our above surmise.

If *Vinukonḍa* was the original home of the *Viṣṇukunḍins*, when did they rise to power? The inscriptions of *Viṣṇukunḍin* kings so far discovered are all dated in their regnal year without reference to any specifically known era and render it difficult to precisely fix their period of rule of this dynasty. However, on the synchronism afforded by the

1. Epi. Ind., Vol. IV, p. 193 ff.

2. Epi. Ind., Vol. XII, p. 133 ff.

3. Epi. Ind., Vol. XVII, p. 337 ff.

4. J.A.H.R.S., Vol VI, p. 17 ff.

5. Writing about the name '*Viṣṇukunḍin*', D. F. Keilborn had observed as follows. "The name *Viṣṇukunḍin* has not so far as I know, been met with in other epigraphical records. Considering the locality where these plates come from, as well as the facts that the written vernacular was Telugu and that the donor worshipped the lord of *Śrīparvata* which I take to be the sacred *Śrīsaila* in the Kurnool District of a hill fort and town in the Krishna District, about 60 miles east of *Śrīsaila*.....and that this *Vinukonḍa* which is reported to be a place of great antiquity was really the capital of *Viṣṇukunḍins*". Epi. Ind., Vol. IV, p. 194-195.

6. Inscriptions of 3rd Cent. A.D. from Nagarjunakonda in the Palnad Taluq of Guntur District (Epi. Ind., Vol. XX,) however, refer to that place as *Siri Pavvata*. But this place is known more for its Buddhist antiquities and associations with the name of *Ācārya Nāgārjuna*, the founder of the '*Mādhyamika*' school of *Mahāyāna Buddhism*. Recent excavations conducted at the site have revealed contemporary shrines dedicated to *Śiva* also but they have been called in the records by the names '*Puṣpabhadra*' and '*Sārvadēva*'. Hence the appellation *Śrīparvatasvāmi* found in the *Viṣṇukunḍin* records may have to be identified with *Mallikārjuna* of *Śrīsailam*, the famous centre of *Saivism* in *Andhra*.

copper plate records it is possible for us to fix at least the terminal date with reasonable precision. The *Pulombūru* plates of *Viṣṇukunḍin Mādhavavarma* which register the gift of the village to the brahmin *Śivaśarma* was later on renewed on the 5th regnal year of *Jayasimha-I* of the Eastern *Chālukyan* dynasty, who succeeded the *Viṣṇukunḍins* as the overlords of *Vēngi* and *Guddavadi Viṣaya*. From other records of the Eastern *Chālukyan* ruler, we know *Jayasimha-I* son of *Viṣṇuvardhana-I* ruled between 641-73 A.D.¹ Considerable difference of opinion exists between scholars about the date of conquest and occupation of *Vēngi* region by the *Chālukyas*. The *Aihole* inscription² of *Pulakēsin-II* refers to the *Chālukyan* conquest of coastal Telugu country while the *Kopparam* plates³ of the same monarch allude to the grant of *Vēngi* to *Viṣṇuvardhana* and his lineage. The date of this latter grant was discussed by R. Sewell at Dr. Hultzsch's request, and he assigns it to Thursday, October 10, 631 A.D. This when read with the contents of the *Aihole* inscription of *Pulakēsin-II*, makes it possible to infer that the coastal Telugu country went under the *Chālukyas* sometime before 630 A.D. or to be more exact in 624 A.D.⁴ We further learn from the *Kāṭlaparru*⁵ grant of *Guṇaga Vijayāditya* and the *Painḍipāka* grant of *Chālukya Bhima-I*⁶ that *Satyāśraya*'s brother *Viṣṇuvardhana* destroyed the *Durjayas* and obtained *Vēngi* country for the first time and made it his own. Who this *Durjaya* king from whom *Viṣṇuvardhana* wrested *Vēngi* kingdom is not however mentioned in the inscription. Dr. N. Venkataramanayya⁷ surmises that he might probably be *Prithvīmahārāja* of the *Tanḍivāḍa* plates or his immediate successor. The *Edēru* grant⁸ of *Amma-I* also refers to a certain *Daddara* with an irresistible army (*Durdharṣa balam*) whom *Kālakampa* the *niyōgādhikṛita* of *Kubjaviṣṇu* had slain in battle and appropriated his insignia. As such *Daddara* might be connected with the *Durjayas*⁹ from whom *Vēngi* was conquered. Be it as it may, it clearly establishes the fact that *Vēngi* was under the authority of *Durjayas* and not *Viṣṇukunḍins* when it was conquered by *Kubjaviṣṇu* and as such the end of *Viṣṇukunḍin*

1. Dr. N. Venkataramanayya, 'The Eastern *Chālukyas* of *Vēngi*' p. 64 ff.

2. Epi. Ind., Vol. VI, p. 4 ff.

3. Epi. Ind., Vol. XVIII, p. 260 ff.

4. *Ādivāsaka* grant of *Jayasimha-I* dated in his 18th year, and *Koniki* grant of the same ruler dated in his 30th year. See also Sri M. Somasekhara Sarma's view about the date of foundation of *Vēngi* kingdom; Dr. N. Venkataramanayya, 'The Eastern *Chālukyas* of *Vēngi*', p. 55.

5. Manual of Sri Tirumala Venkata Narasimha Charlu, Hindu High School, *Pentapāḍu* 1939-40, p. 22 quoted by Dr. N. Venkataramanayya in his 'The Eastern *Chālukyas* of *Vēngi*' p. 18.

6. Madras Government Oriental RSSS-Lib. (Elliot's Collection 15-6-26, pp. 185-91 ff.

7. The Eastern *Chālukyas* of *Vēngi*, p. 60.

8. S. Ind. Inscription I, No. 36, p. 42.

9. See in this connection, the *Chipurupalli* plates of *Viṣṇuvardhana-I* (I-Ant. XIX, p. 15) where in *Ajñapati* of the records is mentioned to be one '*Atavi Durjaya*' of the *Mastya* family which incidentally furnishes in the informations that the *Oddādi* and *Chipurupalli* areas in the modern *Viśākhapaṭṇam* District were also conquered by *Kubjaviṣṇu* in this same campaign.

authority over *Vēngi* may have to be dated earlier, probably to the last quarter of the 6th Century A. D.

Let us now examine the genealogy of the *Viṣṇukunḍin* dynasty, total number of years of their rule and see if we can fix their initial date.

The subjoined tabulated statement¹ of *Viṣṇukunḍin* records contain all the relevant information needed for the reconstruction of the genealogy of the dynasty and this subject had been studied by many eminent scholars like Kielhorn², Hultzs³, Sewell⁴, K. V. Lakshmanarao⁵, Prof. J. Dubreuil⁶, M. Somasekhara Sarma⁷, R. Subbarao⁸, B.V. Krishna Rao⁹, Dr. D. C. Sircar¹⁰, V. S. Ramachandramurthy¹¹ and Prof. K.A. Nilakantha Sastry¹². Still no satisfactory and agreeable genealogy of *Viṣṇukunḍin* dynasty has been formulated so far.

Basing on the palaeography of the inscriptions, Prof. Hultzs³ had identified *Mādhavavarma* of *Ipur* plates with the ruler of same name mentioned in *Chikkulla* plates. As regards *Mādhavavarma-II*, the issuer of *Ipur* plates II, the same scholar felt that the script belonged to an earlier type than that of the first set and concluded that *Mādhavavarma* son of *Gōvindavarma* of *Ipur* (Set I) is the grandson of *Mādhavavarma-II* of *Ipur* (Set II). This identification was questioned by subsequent scholars. Prof. R Subbarao formulated the scheme of *Viṣṇukunḍin* genealogy as follows :

1. Chart showing the pedigree of *Viṣṇukunḍin* kings from their copper plate grants.

<i>Chikkulla</i>	<i>Ramatīrtham</i>	<i>Ipur I</i>	<i>Ipur II</i>	<i>Polombūru</i>	<i>Tunḍi</i>
<i>Mādhavavarma</i>	<i>Mādhavavarma</i>	<i>Gōvindavarma</i>	<i>Mādhavavarma</i>	<i>Vikramēndra</i>	<i>Mādhavavarma</i>
<i>Vikramēndra</i>	<i>Vikramēndra</i>	<i>Mādhavavarma</i>	<i>Dēvavarma</i>	<i>Gōvindavarma</i>	<i>Vikramēndra</i>
|	|	37th year	|	|	<i>Bhaṭṭāraka</i>
<i>Indrabhaṭṭārakavarma</i>	<i>Indravarma</i>	<i>Manehanne</i>	<i>Mādhavavarma</i>	<i>Mādhavavarma</i>	<i>Indravarma</i>
|	27th year	<i>Bhaṭṭāraka</i>	47th year	48th year	|
Eldest son of					<i>Vikramēndra</i>
<i>Vikramēndravarma</i>					<i>Bhaṭṭāraka</i>
10th					14th year

2. Epi. Ind., Vol. IV, p. 193 ff.

3. Epi. Ind., Vol. XII, p. 193 ff, Vol. XVI, p. 334 ff., Ibid, p. 337 ff.

4. History of Southern India, p. 404.

5. Journal of the Dept. of Letters, Calcutta University, Vol. XI, p. 131.

6. Ancient History of Deccan

7. Bharati, Sept., 1930, & Feb., 1931 ; see also J.A.H.R.S. Vol. V., p. 185.

8. J.A.H.R.S. Vol. VI, p. 17 ff.

9. Bharati 1934-35 and Early Dynasty of Andhra Desa.

10. Successors of *Sātavāhanas*, p. 97 ff.

11. J.A.H.R.S., Vol. X, p. 187 ff.

12. History of Indian People.

Mādhava-I (Probably ruled about 400 A.D.)

|
Dēvavarma

|
Mādhavavarma-II (Donor of *Ipur* plates [Set I])

|
Gōvindavarma

|
Mādhavavarma-III (Donor of *Ipur* plates [Set II] 37th year)

|
Vikramēndravarma-I

|
Indrabhaṭṭāraka or *Indravarma* (Donor of *Ramatīrtham* plates. 27th year. Probably ruled from 525-555 A.D.).

|
Vikramēndravarma-II (Donar of *Chikkulla* Plates. 10th year)

This was, however, questioned by Sri M. Somasekhara Sarma, who re-examined the case in detail and hazarded the following arrangement of their pedigree :

Mādhavavarma-I (400 A.D.)

|
Dēvavarma (400-425 A.D.)

|
Mādhavavarma-II (425-462)

|
Gōvindavarma (462-487 A.D.)

|
Mādhavavarma-III (487-535 A.D.)

|
Vikramēndravarma-I (535-560)

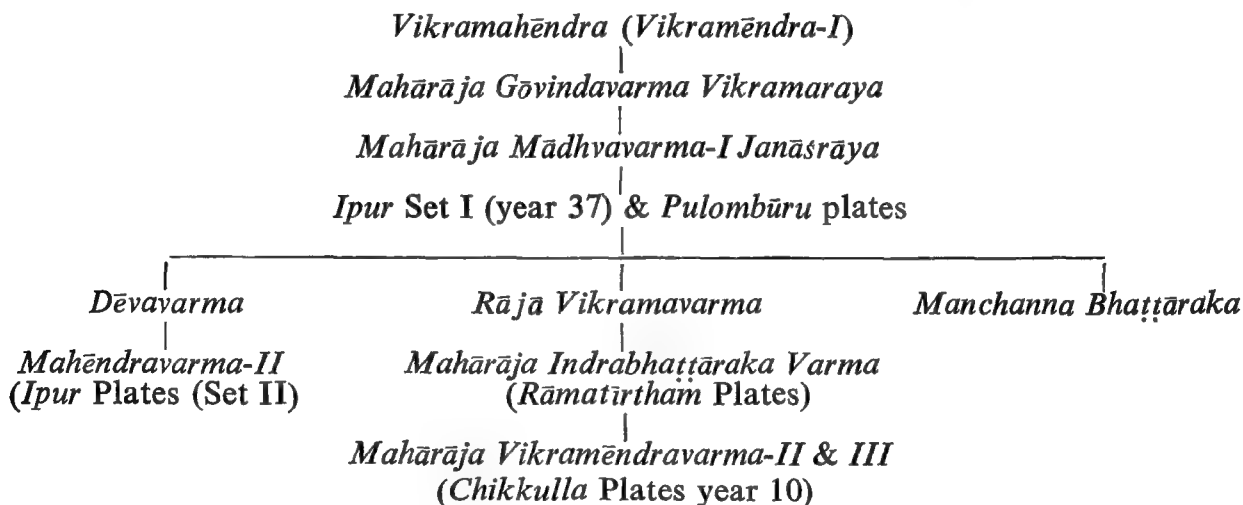
|
Indrabhaṭṭārakavarma (560-587 A.D.)

|
Vikramēndravarma-II (587-612 A.D.)

The identification of Prof. Hultzsch was also disputed by Dr. D. C. Sircar, who on the basis of internal evidence of the grant itself argued that *Mādhavavarma-I*, the grandfather of the issuer of the *Ipur* plates (set II) is described as '*ēkādas-āsvamēdhābhṛt-āvadhauta-jagat-kalmaṣasy-agniṣṭoma-sahasra-yājīnō-nēka-sāmantamakuṭa-kūṭa-maṇi-khacita-caraṇayugala-kamalasya-mahārājasya-Śrī-Mādhava Varmaṇah*' is almost identical with the corresponding description in *Ipur* (set I), and therefore *Mādhavavarma-I* of *Ipur* (set II) is identical with *Mādhavavarma-I* of *Ipur* (set I) and *Mādhavavarma* mentioned in *Chikkulla* plates. The discovery of *Pulombūru* plates which gave the genealogy of *Viṣṇukunḍins* viz.,

further disproved the theory of Prof. Hultzsch that *Mādhavavarma*, son of *Gōvindavarma* is described as the grandson of *Vikramēndra Varma* and not *Mādhavavarma*, while the epithets applied to *Mahārāja Mādhavavarma* in both *Ipur* (set I) and *Pulombūru* plates are identical. He was mentioned as the son of *Mahārāja Gōvindavarma* alias *Vikramāśraya*, a ‘*Hiraṇyagarbha Prasūta*’ and ‘*Trivaranagara-bhavanāgata-parama-yuvatijana-viharana-rati*’ (*Pulombūru*) and ‘*Trivaranagara-bhavanāgata-Yuvati-hridayanandanah*’ *Ipur* (set I).

Dr. D. C. Sircar, after carefully analysing the titles and their implications in different records, finally formulated the genealogy of the *Visnukundins* as—



These arrangements of *Viṣṇukunḍin* genealogy by Messrs. M.S. Sarma and Dr. Sircar were questioned by Sri V.S. Ramachandra Murthy, who found it difficult to agree with the identification of *Mādhavavarma-II* of *Ipur* (Set II) with *Mādhavavarma* of *Rāmatīrtham* and *Chikkulla* plates for the following reasons.

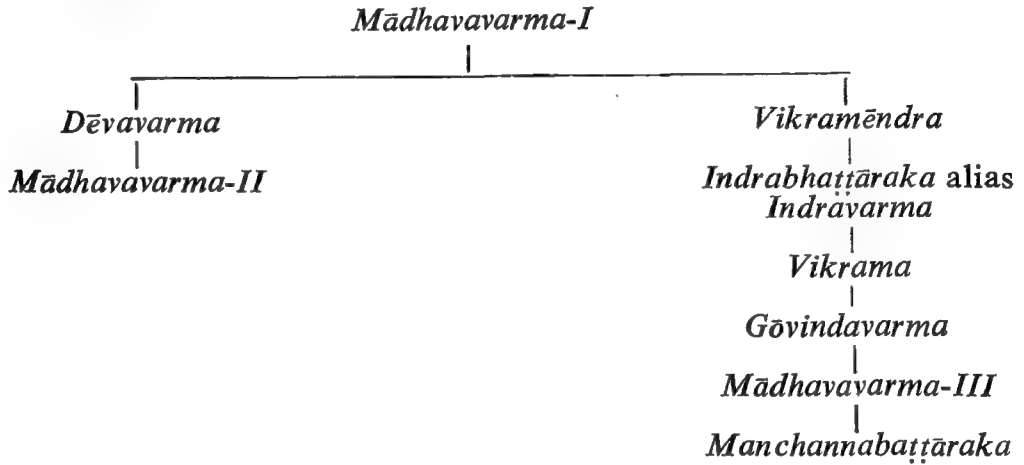
1. *Mādhavavarma-II* never performed any *Aśvamēdhas* while *Mahārāja Mādhavarma* of *Rāmatīrtham* and *Chikkulla* plates each performed eleven *Aśvamēdhas* etc.
2. *Mādhavavarma-II* calls himself '*Trikūta Malayādhipati*' which title is absent in the case of *Mādhavavarma* of *Rāmatīrtham* and *Chikkulla* plates.
3. *Mādhavavarma-II* of *Ipur* (Set I) was not a *Mahārāja* while his namesake in *Chikkulla* and *Rāmatīrtham* record was a *Mahārāja*.

He then refuted the argument of Dr. Sircar saying that his identification of *Mādhavavarma* of *Pulombūru* and *Ipur* (Set I) with *Mādhavavarma* of other plates as 'not warranted

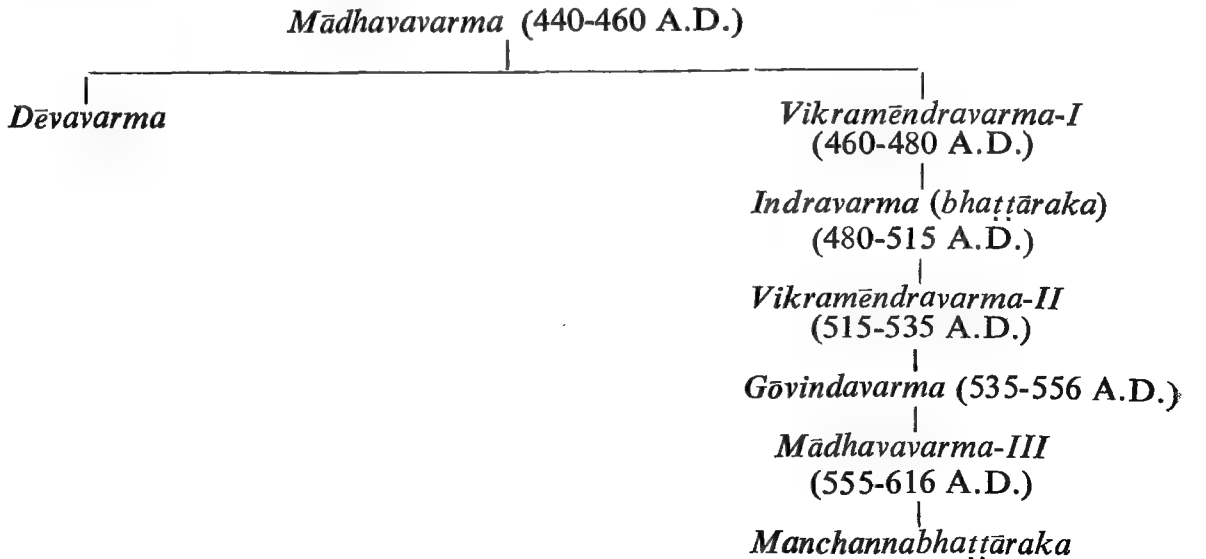
by facts'. He cited the following significant epithets which are conspicuously absent for *Mādhavavarma* the *Asvamēdhayā jin* of *Ipur* (Set II), *Rāmatīrtham* and *Chikkulla* records.

1. *Trivaranagara bhavanāgata parama yuvatī jana viharāṇa ratih.*
2. *Hiranyagarbha prasūtah*
3. The title '*janāśraya*'
4. '*Avasita Vividha divyah*'
5. The references to qualities like *dayā dāna māna* etc.

Finally he arranged the genealogy of the dynasty as :



The arrangement hazarded by Dr. D. C. Sircar was also questioned by Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastry in his recent note contributed to the 'History and Culture of the Indian people'. His scheme is identical with that proposed by Mr. V. S. Ramachandra Murthy, but he adopts the chronology suggested by late Sri B. V. Krishna Rao, as follows:



I am inclined to accept the arrangements of genealogy suggested by Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastry though I beg to differ with him with regard to the initial date of *Viṣṇukunḍin* ascendancy. From the genealogy it is clear that there were nine rulers in all and from the regnal years supplied by their records it is evident that those rulers invariably had long periods of rule. It may not be unreasonable if we presume that this dynasty of nine members ruled *Āndhra* for over two centuries. We have already seen that they were ousted by the *Durjayas* in the first decade of the 7th century and if we are assigning two centuries of rule for the dynasty then we may have to assign the beginnings of their rule to the first quarter of the 5th century or slightly earlier.

We know that after the fall of *Mauryan* Empire there followed in *Āndhra* the rule of *Śatavāhanas* which lasted for nearly four and a half centuries from about 230 B.C. Their empire extended over the whole of *Dakṣiṇāpatha* but by about the middle of the 3rd Century A.D., their power was considerably weakened due to their wars with *Śakas* etc., and with their fall, numerous independent dynasties rose to prominence like the *Sāṅkayanas* in the *Vēngi* region, the *Ikṣvākus* in *Śrīparvata* area (ie., modern *Nalgonda Guntūr* and *Nellore* region), the *Ābhiras* in the Western Deccan¹ etc.

The territory over which *Viṣṇukunḍins* claimed overlordship was actually under the rule of *Ikṣvākus* in the 3rd Century A.D. This short lived dynasty of *Ikshvākus* was founded by *Chāmtamūla-I*, in or about the year 227 A.D. and it was further strengthened by his son *Virapurūṣadatta* who entered into matrimonial alliance with the neighbouring contemporary rulers like the *Chutu Śatakarnīs* of *Vanavāsa*, the *Kṣātrapas* of *Ujjain*, the *Dhanakas*, the *Pukiyas* etc.² His son and successor *Ehuvala Chāmtamūla*, abler than his father, had a long and prosperous rule but at the end of his reign, he had to face invasions from all sides like The *Pallavas*³ from the East and South, the *Ānandagōtrin* kings⁴ from the West etc. One of the *Ikṣvāku* generals claims for his king and himself a grand victory in an inscription, found during the recent excavations at *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*. But the trend of later events seems to show that the power of *Ikṣvākus* was considerably weakened, and during the reign of *Ehuvala*, and his son and successor *Rudrapurūṣadatta*, the *Ikṣvāku* power suffered a complete collapse. One of the recently discovered records⁵ dated in the 30th year (*Chedi* or *Kālachuri* era?) refers to an *Ābhīra* king *Vasusēna* along with numerous other sovereigns hailing from *Ujjain*, *Vanavāsa*, *Sanjayapuri* etc., conjointly effecting some donation to the temple of *Aṣṭabhujasvāmi* at *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*. The significance of their presence at the capital

1. History of Indian People.

2. Epi. Ind., Vol. XX.

3. Bhandarkar, 'History of Deccan'.

4. Epi. Ind., Vol V.

5. *Aṣṭabhujasvāmi* Temple Inscription—Nagarjunakonda (Indian Archaeology—A Review 1959-60).

of *Ikṣvāku* is difficult to conjecture. Since the record is not dated in the regnal years of *Ikṣvāku* king, the local ruler, but in the reign of the *Ābhira* king, it has to be inferred that temporarily the *Ābhīras* gained control over the *Śrīparvata* area. This incident should have taken place some time between 300 and 310 A.D. It is just the period when the *Pallavas* also were making their power felt in this region. During this period of confusion, the *Viṣṇukunḍins* who were round about *Vinukonḍa* area also made a bid for establishing their power, but they had to lie low before the superior strength of the rising *Pallavas*. However, an opportunity soon offered itself. The invasion of the *Gupta* monarch, *Samudragupta* to the South, and his professed victory over the confederacy of South Indian rulers-the *Sālankāyana Hastivarma* of *Vēngi*, *Viṣṇugōpa* of *Kānchi* etc., shook the power of *Sālankāyanas* to their foundations. *Pallavas* also were compelled to concentrate their exploits to the region round about *Kānchi*. After *Samudragupta's* return (380 A.D.), *Mādhavavarma*, the first illustrious ruler of *Viṣṇukunḍin* dynasty should have successfully annexed the regions to the South of *Kṛṣṇa* and marched with his army against the lingering *Sālankāyana* power, which failed against his advances. In commemoration of his victory, he might have performed the *Aśvamēdha* sacrifice. It was perhaps during the course of this northern march, that he came into contact and conflict with the *Vākāṭaka* power who were also just then busy expanding their territories. He entered into a matrimonial alliance with the *Vākāṭaka* who not only strengthened *Viṣṇukunḍin* power but also enhanced the prestige of that dynasty.

MĀDHAVAVARMA-I

The greatest of *Viṣṇukunḍin* kings is *Mādhavavarma-I*. *Ipur* plates (Set II) which is perhaps the earlier of their records credits him with the performance of eleven *Aśvamēdhas* and one thousand *Agniṣṭōmas*. The *Prasasti* of this monarch, presumably the founder, had increased in length, as the power of *Viṣṇukunḍins* spread over large areas. The *Rāmatirtham* plates of *Indravarma*, his grandson, speaks of him as a famous monarch, a conqueror of many kingdoms, whose head was sanctified by the sacred waters poured on him at the culmination of eleven *Aśvamēdhas* and one thousand *Agniṣṭōmas*. The *Chikkulla* plates of his great grandson *Vikramēndra*, further enlarges the lists of sacrifices performed by this grand emperor. He was credited with not only the performance of eleven *Aśvamēdhas* but also with *Bahusuvarṇa*, *Paunḍarika*, *Puruṣamēdha*, *Vājapēya*, 16 *Rājasūyas*, *Prādhirājya* and *Prājāpatya* sacrifices by virtue of which he attained the status of '*Parameṣṭhi*' while the *Tunḍi* plates under review specifies the number of *Bahusuvarṇa* and *Paunḍarikas* as eleven. He is invariably described in the records as a devout worshipper of the feet of '*Śrīparvata-svāmi*'. Since the early records refer to '*Amarapura*' as the seat of *Viṣṇukunḍin* power we may not be far from truth if we identify '*Amarapura*' with '*Amarāvati*', famous for its *Amarēśwara Linga* (*Śiva*) situated on the banks of river *Kṛṣṇa* at a distance of 22 miles

from Guntur. This surmise seems to find confirmation in the legends and traditions that have grown round the name of *Mādhavavarma*, and current in Telugu country, but belonging to later periods.

Though it is difficult to accept the achievements enumerated in the *prasasti* of *Mādhavavarma* to be literally true, there is no reason to doubt that *Mādhavavarma* was the first powerful ruler of *Viṣṇukunḍin* dynasty. He was responsible for carving out an independent principality of his own in the Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh (*Trikūṭamalaya* region) perhaps drove out the *Sālankāyanas* from the region to the south of river *Kṛṣṇa* and even threatened to invade and conquer their very capital *Vēngi*. It is also quite likely that *Viṣṇukunḍins* might have served as officers under *Vākāṭakas*. We know *Vākāṭaka Prithvisēna* (C. 284-344) claims for himself among others, conquest of Andhra. *Viṣṇukunḍins* might have recognised him as overlord and obtained the necessary help for laying the foundations for independent rule. Inscriptions from *Amarāvati* datable to the period C. 150 B.C. to 300 A.D.¹ refer to *Vākāṭakas* thereby indicating the latter's contacts with Andhra Desa. The significant reference to the founder of the dynasty '*Śrī Viṣṇukunḍinam Mahārājasya Śrī Mādhavavarma*' in the *Ipur* plates of *Mādhavavarma-II*, a style of reference typical to the *Vākāṭakas* of the period further lends support to our above surmise.

Thus *Mādhavavarma-I*, though we do not have any record of his time, should have established *Viṣṇukunḍin* power.

The beginnings of *Sālankāyana* rule has been fixed differently by different scholars. Prof. H. C. Roychoudhary, basing on the geography of Ptolemy places *Sālankāyana* of *Vēngi* in 140 A.D., while Prof. Dubreuil reckons their rule between 350 and 450 A.D. Dr. Burnell on Palaeographical grounds assigns *Nandivarma* of this dynasty to 4th Century A.D. However, on the contemporaneity of *Hastivarma* of *Vēngi* with *Samudragupta*, we can confidently fix the rule of *Sālankāyanas* between 300 and 370 A.D.²

The power of the *Sālankāyana* dynasty was considerably weakened by the invasion of the *Gupta* monarch *Samudragupta*. *Hastivarma* of *Vēngi* though he managed to form a strong confederacy of all South Indian powers to stem the tide of *Gupta* invasion, if the Allahabad *Prasasti* is to be believed, was not successful in his endeavour. He was permitted by the *Gupta* overlord to retain his kingdom but his power was so badly shattered that it became an easy prey to the onslaughts of *Viṣṇukunḍins*. *Hastivarma's* successors *Nandivarma* and *Chandavarma* were no match to *Mādhavavarma*, who easily vanquished them in battle and

1. Ep. Ind., Vol. XV, p. 257, No. 27; Recent Excavations conducted by the author at the *Stūpa* site near *Amarāvati* have yielded numerous sculptured slabs. Many of them refer to the *Vākāṭaka* or '*Pahāṭaka*' as the donor of those pieces to the *Stūpa* complex.

2. There were several rulers belonging to *Sālankāyana* dynasty *Dēvavarma* (320-345 A.D.), *Hastivarma* (340-370 A.D.), *Nandivarma-II* (420-425 A.D.), *Skandhavarma* (445-470 A.D.)—D. C. Sircar, *Successors of Sātavāhanas* p. 78..

assumed for himself the high-sounding title '*Anēka Sāmanta makuta-kūṭa maṇikhacita carana yugalah*'. In commemoration of his grand victories, and strictly in accordance with the spirit of the age he performed not one but eleven *Aśvamēdha* sacrifices.

DĒVAVARMA

Mādhavavarma's son and successor *Dēvavarma* is described in *Ipur* plates as a great warrior who took great delight in defeating the contemporary *Kṣatriya* rulers (*Kṣatriya-vaskanda pravartitā pratima vikhyāta parākramasya Śrī Dēvavarma*). Since he was not mentioned as a *Mahārāja* in any of the records, it has to be presumed that he never assumed the titles of Royalty, and that he only helped his father in his numerous campaigns and distinguished himself as a great soldier.

MĀDHAVAVARMA-II

Mādhavavarma-II succeeded to the throne of his grandfather since his father *Devavarma* had predeceased his father. His *Ipur* plates dated in his 47th year describe him as '*trikūṭamalayādhipati*' and residing at *Amarapura*¹. He was said to be a devout worshipper of '*Śrīparvatasvāmi*' and possessed of all the noble qualities - '*nayavinayasatya sampannah*'. He also like his illustrious grandfather had a long and fruitful career of more than forty-seven years, while the *Chikkulla* grant of *Vikramēndravarma* supplies us the list of Vedic sacrifices performed by this illustrious monarch.

Though the records of his sons and successors claim for this monarch great victories, and annexations of territories, the extent of *Viṣṇukunḍin* power remained the same, as we find in *Vēngi* region, the *Sālankāyanas* still ruling during this period.

VIKRAMĒNDRAVARMA-I

His son *Vikramēndravarma* through the *Vākāṭaka* princess, has been considered to have predeceased his father by scholars like late B. V. Krishna Rao, etc., perhaps basing on the tradition of *Mallesvara* temple inscription and the simple reference to him in the records as an ornament of the family of *Viṣṇukunḍins* and *Vākāṭakas* (*Ubhaya Vamsātma-jālāṅkāra bhūta*) and was a devoted son of his father. But the *Tunḍi* plates under review clearly styles him as '*Mahārāja*', a ruling king and extols his exploits as a great warrior and ruler whose feet were brightened by the diadems bedecked in the headgears of vanquished rulers etc. Naturally as a scion of the *Vākāṭaka* family which was still powerful then, *Vikramēndra* must have commanded great respect and wielded a lot of power, as against other sons of *Mādhavavarma-II*.

1. *Amarapura* has been taken to be the earlier name of *Vinukonḍa* the original home of *Viṣṇukunḍins* by Sri B. V. Krishna Rao (History of *Viṣṇukunḍins*-Bharati p. 414). I am unable to agree with his suggestions because the name *Vinukonḍa* survives to this day. At no date in history after the fall of *Viṣṇukunḍins*, *Vinukonḍa* was referred to as '*Amarapura*', while the territory over which *Viṣṇukunḍins* claimed authority, *Trikūṭamalaya* correctly identified by the same author at the modern Narasaraopet - Kotappakonda region was known in subsequent records as '*Kṛṣṇavenna dakṣiṇa saṭsahasrāvani*' and its rulers had their head quarters at *Amarāvati* (*Dhānyakaṭaka*) (ref. Kota chiefs of *Aamarāvati* etc, in this connection).

INDRABHAṬṬĀRAKA

Vikramēndravarma-I's son *Indrabhaṭṭāraka Varma* succeeded to the throne early in the beginning of the 6th century. By then the political set up in the coastal *Āndhra* had considerably changed and that needed a reorientation of the policy of the *Viṣṇukunḍin* ruler. In the south the *Pallavas* at *Kānchi* had consolidated their gains and were ready to launch an offence to extend their territories. In the west, the *Kadambas* with their capital at *Banavāsi* were equally eager to make their power felt in the eastern direction. The *Sālankāyanas* were completely wiped out from *Vēngi*, and their kingdom became a happy hunting ground for adventurers like the *Māṭharas* of *Piṣṭapura*, the early 'Varman' kings of *Kālinga* and even the *Vākātakas*.

Indrabhaṭṭārakavarma had naturally to deal with all these forces for maintaining his hold over his ancestral dominions. The inscriptions of the period seem to throw some light on the confused state of affairs that were flourishing and the determined efforts of *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* at maintaining his hold, but all shrouded in allegorical statements.

His was not a peaceful successor to the throne. He had to fight with his kinsmen to establish his own rights. *Mādhavavarma-II* seems to have had sons other than *Vikramēndra-I*, and naturally the progeny of those, who felt that they had equal claims for the kingdom and throne, might have made common cause against *Indrabhaṭṭāraka*. The *Rāmatirtham* record is curiously silent about it but we get references like—"bhrūbhṛīṅākara vinirdhūta samagra dāyādasya" in *Chikkulla* plates, and "samāghrāta matṛitrasta kāndisibhūta-visirṇa-prānāstaśeṣa dāyādasya"—in the *Tunḍi* plates which are quite significant in this context. *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* with his superior wisdom, skill and prowess proved himself to be more than a match to all of them. He succeeded in wiping out all those 'dāyādas' who gave him trouble and established himself strongly on the throne of his father.

He was a very successful soldier who could lead his armies to distant lands bringing under subjection the rulers of those regions.

We have a record of this monarch dated in his 27th year at *Rāmatirtham* near *Vizianagaram* in the distant *Visakhapatnam* District, where we find the king himself ordering the gift of the village *Peruvaṭaka* in the *Plāki rāṣṭra* to a *Brāhmaṇa*, named *Nagnasarma* so that merit might accrue to himself. This clearly indicates that the king was just then busy conquering and annexing southern *Kālinga*.

Kālinga was also overrun by the *Gupta* monarch *Samudragupta* in his southward march when numerous petty chieftains like *Vyāghrarāja* of *Mahākāntāra*, *Damana* of *Airandapalli*, *Mahēndra* of *Piṣṭapura* etc. were all routed. Closely following the *Gupta* invasion, we learn from the copper plate records discovered in this area that a new dynasty named *Māṭharas* styling themselves as *Kālingādhipatis* were ruling from *Piṣṭapura*. The

Ragolū plates¹ mention the name of *Śaktivarma*, while *Ananta Śaktivarma*, the successor of *Śaktivarma* is known to us from his *Andhavaram* record.² The latter was ousted from his ancestral dominions and was actually driven to the north in the course of which this *Andhavaram* record was issued from a military camp (*Mahāhastyśvaskandhāvārāt*). The power that was responsible for driving him out of *Piṣṭapura* (modern *Piṭapuram* in Godavari District) is not specifically mentioned. In this connection, the information supplied by the *Tandivāḍa* grant of *Prithvimahārāja* issued from *Piṣṭapura* seems to help us. This *Prithvimahārāja* is said to belong to *Rāmakāśyapasagōtra* and is described as a grandson of *Mahārāja Raṇadurjaya* and son of *Vikramēndra*. This record is dated in his 46th year. This family of *Durjaya* of *Piṣṭapura* might have played the role of aggressors either on their own behalf or on behalf of *Viṣṇukunḍins* whose power was then in the ascendancy. The latter seems to be more probable. *Raṇadurjaya* might have served as an officer under the *Viṣṇukunḍin* king *Vikramēndra*, who in token of recognition of the services rendered might have allowed him to rule *Piṣṭapura* as a vassal, and he in his turn, exhibited his loyalty and affection to his overlord by naming his son after his overlord.

The *Rāmatīrtham* plates describe *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* as a *Paramamāhēsvara* and ‘*anēka caturḍanta samara sata sahasra saṅghaṭṭa vijayi*’. This same epithet is applied to him in the *Chikkulla* plates of his son *Vikramēndravarma-II*. These references naturally imply that he had waged numerous wars with the possessors of elephants and achieved victories. ‘*Caturddanta*’ is properly the epithet of *Indra’s Airāvata*, the elephant of the East. The reference therefore implies that *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* fought with the ruler of the East or *Kaliṅga* from which corner there should have been trouble.

Two copper plate grants³ were discovered one at the place called *Siripuram*, near *Chīpurupalli* and the other near *Sṛiṅavarapukōṭa*, in the *Viśakhapatnam* district. They record gifts of villages located in the area now covered by *Jeypore* and *Bastar* estates to *Brāhmaṇas* well versed in *Vēdas*. These records are palaeographically datable to the 6th Century A.D. The script of *Siripuram* plates resembles very much the script of *Ramatīrtham* plates of *Indravarma*.

These records refer to a family of rulers of at least three generations, belonging to *Vasiṣṭagōtra*, who style themselves ‘*Mahārāja*’ and rulers of *Dēvarāṣṭra* (modern *Viśakhapatnam Jeypore* regions) viz. *Mahārāja Guṇavarma*, his son *Mahārāja Prabhañjanavarmā-II*, his son *Mahārāja Anantavarma*. The last mentioned king issued a grant in his 13th regnal year

1. Epi. Indica Vol. XII p. 1-3

2. Epi. Indica Vol. XXIX

3. *Siripuram* copper plate record: Bharati, Prajotpatti Bhadrpadā 451-458, *Kindoppa* copper plate inscription of *Anantavarma*. These two records were edited by Sri Manda Narasimham Pantulu of Srikakulam. His dating of the record as 86 A.D. is difficult to accept as the palaeography of the inscription would clearly show that they are later and belong to 6th Century A.D.

from '*Piṣṭapurādhiṣṭhāna*'. He also bore the title '*Kalingādhipati*' and is described as a valiant king who acquired lands by his own strength (*Sva bala vikramōpārjita bhūh*).

We have seen earlier that *Piṣṭapura* was brought under the sway of *Viṣṇukunḍins* during the reign of *Vikramēndravarma-I* and the tract was given to *Prithvimahārāja*. The copper plates, which refer to the dynasty of *Vasiṣṭas*, however, seem to suggest that *Anantavarma*, had conquered the region round about *Piṣṭapura* and while camping at that place issued the land grant of *Kindoppa*. If we are to believe the information contained in the *Ramatīrtham* plates of *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* it has to be surmised that this occupation of *Piṣṭapura* and *Dēvarāṣṭra* by the rulers of *Vasiṣṭakula* was not only resisted by *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* who after defeating them in many a battle (*Anēka caturddanta samara saṁghaṭṭa vijayī*) leading his victorious armies himself, penetrated into the heart of *Dēvarāṣṭra* in his 27th year and reestablished his authority over these regions.

But this success of *Indravarma* over the *Kalingādhipati* was only short lived. Soon danger loomed large to the kingdom of *Viṣṇukunḍins* from different directions. The kinsman of *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* whom he had banished from his kingdom earlier seems to have started fomenting trouble from outside by inciting neighbouring rulers to invade *Viṣṇukunḍin* territories. A distant echo of this we find in the boast recorded by *Hastibhōja*, the minister of *Vākātaka* king *Harisena* in his *Ajanta* inscription.¹ Even the political successors of *Vākātakas* in their dominions seem to have attacked Andhra. But the worst attack came from the east. The early *Gāngas* of *Kalinga* who were just then emerging out as a strong power, seem to have launched an attack on the *Viṣṇukunḍin* territories enlisting the support of all the petty rulers, who were earlier defeated by *Indrabhaṭṭāraka*. The *jirjīngi* plates² of *Indravarma Gānga* dated in his 39th year refer to his victory in '*Caturddanta samaras*'. This incident is also recorded in greater detail in the Godavari plates of *Prithvimūla* dated in the 25th year of *Prithvimūla*³ as follows: "*avāpta caturddantasāṁgrāma vijayasya Mitāvarmmanah priyatanayēna sarabhasam Indrabhaṭṭārasamutpātanābhilāṣa samudita pramuditāśēṣanripatikṛita tumula samarādhirūḍha Supratikānēkapābhimukha samada Kumudadviradanipātanādhigatabhuvanatala-vitala-vipula-visuddha yasasā Śrīmad-Indrādhirājēna*' etc.⁴

The identification of *Adhirāja Indra* has been differently done by different scholars. Dr. Fleet⁵ who edited the inscription basing on the palaeography and locality from where the inscriptions came, opined that '*The Adhirāja Indra*' at whose request the grant was made is mentioned as having fought in company with other chiefs who united to overthrow a

1. Arch. Surv. of West. Ind., Vol. IV, p. 124.

2. J.A.H.R.S. Vol. III P. 1.

3. J.B.B.R.A.S. Vol. XVI P. 114.

4. J.B.B.R.A.S. Vol. XIII, P. 117 Text-Lines 15-21.

5. Ibid.

certain '*Indrabhaṭṭāraka*' is identical with the Eastern *Chalukya* king of the name, and brother of *Jayasimhā-I*. This has been proved to be incorrect by subsequent writers and the entire allegorical references is to the fight between *Viṣṇukunḍin* *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* and Eastern *Gāṅga* king *Indravarma*, the *Kalingādhipati* *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* was completely routed in the battle by that strong confederacy and even seems to have lost his life.

Indrabhaṭṭāraka was not only a great conqueror but also an accomplished monarch. He is said to have taken pleasure in distributing his riches, establishing schools and propogating *Vaidika-dharma*. The *Chikkulla* plates describe him as “*yadhāvidhi-viniryāpita-ghatikāvāpta-punya-saṁcayasya, satata bhūmi - go-kanyā-hiraṇya - pradāna - pratilabdha-punya - jivitōpabhōgasya, parama-māhēśvarasya*” etc. *Ghaṭika* is a *Vidyāsthāna* and the procedure with regard to the establishment of '*Ghaṭikas*' is propounded by *Udanka* in *Sāma Vēda*. The early reference to the existence of '*Ghaṭikas*' in Telugu country we find only in the *Viṣṇukunḍin* records.

VIKRAMĒNDRAVARMA-II

Indrabhaṭṭāraka was succeeded by his eldest son *Vikramēndra*. We have a record of this king dated in his 10th regnal year, wherein he has been described as '*priya jyēṣṭha putra*' of *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* who was blessed with the noble qualities required for a king, and well-acquainted with statecraft, even from childhood. (*Saisava ēva sakala nṛipaguṇālankṛitasya = samyagadhyā-rōpita sakala rājya bhārah* etc.).

With the defeat and death of *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* at the hands of *Indravarma Gāṅga*, the *Viṣṇukunḍin* power suffered a severe setback. Their authority was not recognised in the Godavari and Visakhapatnam districts and naturally the conditions in the state were not quite congenial when *Vikramēndra-II* succeeded to the throne. His first task was to stabilise his position. This task, he seems to have achieved quite well as is indicated by the epithets given to him in the *Pulombūru* plates - '*apratihata sāsanasya*'. He seems to have made some efforts at resuscitating the fallen glories but did not achieve any substantial success, in that direction. On the contrary, the kingdom became a prey to the invasions of *Maukhari* kings of *Kanauj* at whose hands the *Viṣṇukunḍin* monarch appears to have suffered a defeat. In the *Harha* inscription dated 554 A.D., the *Maukhari* king *Isānavarma* claims victory over an *Āndhra nṛipati*, who is none else but the *Viṣṇukunḍin* monarch.¹

His *Chikkulla* inscription is issued from *Lendulūruvāsaka*. This place has been identified with *Dendulūru*, a village very near Ellore in West Godavari district. This shifting of his capital from *Bezwāda* to *Lenduluru* might have been done by this monarch to facilitate the defence of the country from the depredations of *Gāṅgas* and other rulers of eastern regions. In spite of his set back, *Indrabhaṭṭāraka* seems to have been undisputed ruler over the regions to the south of Krishna River, as is indicated by his grant of the *Rēgonra* village

1. Political History of Ancient India. p. 373; see also Corpus. Ins. Ind. Vol. III, p. 230 ff.

to Lord *Triyambaka* alias *Sōmagirīśvaranātha* as a *Dēvabhōga*. Since his *Tunḍi* plates are dated in his 14th year we can safely presume that he ruled for about fifteen years.

GŌVINDAVARMA

Vikramēndra-II was succeeded by his son *Gōvindavarma* alias *Vikramāśraya*. Times needed a strong man, and *Gōvindavarma*, a reputed soldier that he was, tried his best to maintain the glory of *Viṣṇukunḍin* family. He has been described in very laudable terms *aparimita balaparākramasya-paramadhārmikasya-praṇata sakala sāmāntasya* etc., both in the *Pulombūru* and *Ipur* records. The kingdom, as has been mentioned already, became a prey to the attacks from *Gāngas* of *Kalinga*, *Pallavas* of *Kānchi*, and the rising power of *Chālukyas*. No wonder if *Gōvindavarma* had to spend his entire life fighting—*anēka samara saṅghaṭṭa vijayinah*. He had only succeeded in maintaining the integrity of the kingdom inherited by him and bequeathed the same to his son and successor *Mādhavavarma-III*.

MĀDHAVAVARMA-III JANĀŚRAYA

Mādhavavarma-III is the last important ruler of this illustrious family. He succeeded to the throne of his father at a pretty early age and had the unique fortune of ruling the kingdom for more than half a century. The *Ipur* record dated in his 37th year describes him as - *smṛiti mati bala satya, dhairya, vīrya vinaya sampannah, sakala mahīmaṇḍala manuḥpati pratipūjita sāsanaḥ, Trivara nagara bhavanagata yuvatī hṛdaya nandanah, svabhujabala vijita sakala sāmāntakula bala vinaya naya niyama satya sampannah - agniṣṭōma sahasrāyāji hiranya garbha prasūtaḥ, ekādaśa asvamēdhāvabhṛdhāvadhauta jagatkalamaṣaḥ susthira karma mahārājah* etc. while his *Pulombūru* records further lengthen his *prasasti* by adding the epithets - *daśasata sakala dharaṇītala narapatih avasīta nividha divyah, sarvabhūta parirakṣṇa-cuncuh vidvadvijagum vṛiddha tapasvi janāśraya* etc. All these epithets need not necessarily be taken as mere empty boasts as suggested by some. We know that when he ascended the throne *Viṣṇukunḍin* power had received severe set back and his authority was confined to *Vēngi* region only. This is perhaps indicated by his title '*daśasata sakala dharaṇītala nṛpati*'. Mr. M. Somasekhara Sarma has rightly identified '*daśasata sakala dharaṇītala*' with *Vēngi* country.¹ Presumably during the early years of his reign *Mādhavavarma-III* was compelled to stabilise his position at home and that was perhaps the reason why he did not launch an attack on the neighbouring rulers till late in his reign. This was also necessitated by practical considerations. The inter-statal set up just then was not quite congenial for taking up any campaign. In the west the *Chālukyas* under *Pulakēsin-I* (540-566 A.D.) and his sons *Kirtivarma* (566-590) and *Mangalēsa* were making their power felt while in the South the *Pallavas* under *Simhavarma* and his successor *Simhaviṣṇu* and *Mahēndravarma* were already at the height of their power, fighting with the *Chālukyas* for supremacy over Deccan and South India. In *Kalinga*, the early *Gāngas* with their capitals at *Dantapura* and *Vijaya Kalinganagara* under *Hasti-*

1. Journal of Oriental Research a note on '*Daśasata sakala dharaṇītala*' by Sri M. Somasekhara Sarma.

varma and *Indravarma*, were busy building up their power, while in the north-west beyond Godavari, the *Nalas* under *Bhāvadatta* and *Arthapati*, made themselves masters of *Jaipur-Bastar* regions. In the face of such mighty and powerful rivals, *Mādhavavarma-III*, the prudent ruler that he was, correctly assessed his own strength, and spent his early years well in consolidating his position.

In the later part of his reign he felt himself quite strong to launch an attack against the *Gāngas*. His *Ipur* record was issued from a *Skandhāvāra* or army camp when the king's son *Manchannabhaṭṭāraka* was also present, while his *Pulombūru* grant was given when the king was actually crossing the river Godavari with the desire of conquering the Eastern regions. This latter record is dated in his 48th year.

From these inscriptions, it is clear that *Mādhavavarma* was busy fighting between his 35th and 48th regnal years. Both those records mention the epithets '*Trivaranagara bhavanagata parama yuvati hṛdayanandanah*', which is suggestive of his marriage with the princess of *Trivaranagara*. *Trivaranagara* has been identified by some with *Tewar*, the capital of *Kālachuris* of *Chēdi*. The *Kālachuris* became powerful after the fall of *Vākāṭakas* and claimed descent from the *Haihaya* king *Arjuna* son of *Kṛitavīrya* and ruler of *Māhiṣmati*. They became powerful in the second half of sixth century when they are found in occupation of northern Maharashtra, Gujarat and parts of Malwa. They have adopted an era A.D. 248-249-which came to be known as the *Kālachuri* era. About the close of the 6th century, the *Chāḷukyas* of *Bādāmi* attacked the kingdom of *Kālachuris* from the south during which period the latter were compelled to move towards the east and settle in Jubbulpore area. Of these early *Kālachuris* *Śankaragaṇa* and his son *Buddharāja* are famous. *Śankaragaṇa* is said to have acquired royal fortune by the prowess of his arms and is credited with reinstating many kings who lost their thrones. His son *Buddharāja* was put to flight by *Chāḷukya Mangalēsa* (C. 597-610 A.D.).

It is not therefore, very clear with which *Kālachuri* king *Mādhavavarma* entered into marital alliance and so far there is no evidence forthcoming to help us in solving this problem.

Numerous interesting anecdotes are told about *Mādhavavarma* and his noble qualities of head and heart in the Telugu country. One of the records¹ in the temple of *Mallēswara* at Bezwada refers to a king named *Mādhavavarma* reigning in Saka (year 514, (*Śakābhdi sasi sayaka sammite*) who sentenced his son to death, to meet the ends of justice on the latter's killing the child of a beggar woman, who eked out her livelihood by selling tamarind (*tintriṇi jivini*). On seeing this God *Mallēswara* was pleased and rained on him a shower of gold and brought back to life the deceased prince and the child of the beggar woman. Thus god *Mallēswara* established the fame of king *Mādhavavarma* in this world. Though

1. S.I.I., Vol. VI, No.

the dynasty to which this *Mādhavavarma* belonged is not specifically mentioned in the inscriptions, since no other king with the name *Mādhavavarma*, known from any other source, had ruled from Bezvada, it is reasonable to presume that the reference was to the *Viṣṇukunḍin* king *Mādhavavarma*. *Daggupalli Dugganna's Nacikētopakhyaṇa*, a literary work of 15th century records the same story about *Mādhavavarma*¹ in greater detail. Besides these, numerous pretty ruling dynasties of a later date (after 12th century) claimed their descent from *Mādhavavarma*. Of these *Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara Uggravādi Mēlarasu* a subordinate of *Kākatīyas* who mentions himself to be a descendant of *Mādhavavarma* is interesting since that seems to indicate the extent to which the fame and authority of *Mādhavavarma* had spread towards the interior of *Telangāna*.²

Distant echos of *Mādhavavarma's* wars with *Kalinga* rulers we find in the late Telugu literature.³

The contemporary *Kalinga* rulers of the *Gāṅga* family are *Hastivarma Rājasimha*, the donor of *Uṟlām* plates⁴ and his successor *Indravarma* who issued *Achyutapuram* record⁵ of G.E. 87, *Santabommili Parlākimiḍi*⁶ and *Narsingapalli* copper plates.⁷ The *Prasasti* of *Hastivarma* of *Uṟlām* plates contains some significant epithets, which seem to throw some light on the affairs of *Kalinga* during the period under review. He claims for himself the credit of successful conquest and establishing the *Gāṅga Kula* after waging many fierce battles. '*Svasidhara paṛispaṇḍhigata sakala Kalingādhiraṅgyasya* and *Gāṅgāmalakula pratiṣṭah*' etc. If these claims are not mere boasts then *Hastivarma* must have fought with the neighbouring rulers to establish for himself, the overlordship over '*sakala kalinga*'. we have seen earlier the lower *Kalinga* comprising of *Dēvarāṣṭra* (modern Visakhapatnam Dt.) and *Piṣṭapura*, were under *Viṣṇukunḍins* while the western regions comprising of *Bastar* and *Jēypur* areas were under the *Nala* chiefs. It is reasonable, therefore, to presume that by about 578 A.D. *Hastivarma* came into conflict with *Viṣṇukunḍins* when he made efforts to retrieve *Dēvarāṣṭra* and that necessitated *Mādhavavarma-III*, to move with his armies to the eastern region. The fight seems to be a protracted one for more than ten years, but ultimately *Mādhavavarma* seems to have been successful as we have his record donating lands in *Gudāvāḍa Viṣaya* which area has been located by Sri B. V. Krishna Rao in the western regions of modern Visakhapatnam District.

But this success of *Mādhavavarma* proved to be a purely temporary one. When his armies were completely tired out with that protracted *Kalinga* campaign, he was compelled

1. S. K. Ayyangar, Sources for the History of *Vijayanagar*. See also *Bhārati*, Article by Sri M. Soma-sekhara Sarma.

2. Ep. Ind. Vol. IX, p. 256.

3. Dubagunta Narayanakavi, '*Panchatantram*'.

4. '*Kalingadēśa Charitra*', R. Subba Rao, p. 31, E. 1. Vol.

5. '*Kalingadēśa Charitra*', R. Subba Rao, p. 35, E. 1, Vol. III, No. 20-127-130.

6. '*Kalingadēśa Charitra*', p. 43, JAHRS, Vol. IV, P to I & II.

7. Ind. Ant. Vol. 16, p. 131-134.

to defend his frontiers from the attack of *Chālukyas*.

It is well known that the authentic history of *Chālukyas* begins with *Jayasimhavallabha*, the founder of the family. But little is known of him and his son *Raṇarāga* who ruled from *Bādāmi*. *Chālukyans* came to be reckoned as a power only from the time of *Pulakēsin-I* son of *Raṇarāga*. He is said to have performed an *Aśvamēdha* sacrifice and built the strong fortress of *Vātāpi* in 543-4 A.D. This small principality soon developed into a mighty power under his son *Kirtivarma*. The latter's exploits are recounted in the records of later rulers. Of these, the *Mahākūṭa* pillar inscription of *Mangalēśa*, the younger brother of *Kirtivarma* credits him with the conquest of *Vāṅga*, *Anga*, *Vattura*, *Magadha*, *Mādraka*, *Kēraḷa*, *Gaṅga*, *Mūṣaka*, *Pāndya*, *Draṇiḷa*, *Chōḷa*, *Ālūka* and *Vaijayanti*, while the *Aihole* inscription of his son *Pulakēsin-II*, adds *Nalas*, the *Mauryas* and the *Kadambas* to the list. *Kirtivarma* died in 578-79 A.D. was succeeded by his brother *Mangalēśa*, who ruled over thirty years. He was a powerful warrior and a great conqueror. We have already seen that he had put an end of the *Kālachuris* by driving out *Buddharāja* and declared himself the unquestioned master of entire western and northern Deccan. But soon dissension rose in the ranks with the revolt headed by his nephew *Pulakēsin-II*, who opposed *Mangalēśa* and killed him after defeating him in battle. *Pulakēsin-II* proved to be an abler ruler and conqueror. He succeeded in establishing his authority over all his ancestral dominion and celebrated his coronation in 609-10 A.D. *Pulakēsin-II* was an ambitious monarch and followed a vigorous policy of aggression. His *Aihole* inscription graphically describes all his achievements. This policy of aggression brought him into conflict with *Harṣa*, who was then trying to push his conquest to the South. In a battle that was fought on the banks of *Rēva*, *Harṣa* was defeated and was compelled to abandon all his designs for territories in Deccan.

To the East of *Mahārāṣṭra* lay the kingdom of *Kōsala* and *Kalinga*. *Pulakēsin-II's* ambition was further kindled with his grand victory over *Harṣa*. He therefore set out to conquer all the kingdoms and to make himself paramount sovereign of the whole of Deccan. He overpowered *Kōsala* and *Kalinga* with ease and turning South West proceeded towards the coast and attacked *Piṣṭapura* and the island of *Kunala*.

It was perhaps to defend his frontiers while the *Chālukyan* armies were busy in *Kōsala* and *Kalinga* that *Mādhavarma-III*, crossed Godavari, with his armies in his 48th year. Though he claims complete victory for himself, as indicated by the trend of later events, the *Viṣṇukunḍin* power was completely annihilated, and the *Viṣṇukunḍin* monarch was perhaps killed in action.

The *Aihole* inscription of *Pulakēsin-II* graphically describes the battle. *Piṣṭapura* was reduced to powder, while the waters of *Kunala* (Kolleru lake area) was coloured with the blood of men killed with many weapons, and the land within it overspread with arrays

of elephants was like the cloud-covered sky in which the red evening-twilight has risen.¹ In this task of conquest of the East, *Pulakēsin-II* was helped by *Kubjaviṣṇu*, his brother. The emperor in token of his appreciation of services of his brother gave the newly conquered territories in the east as a gift to *Kubjaviṣṇu* who started his independent dynasty with *Vēngi* as his capital. This, he must have achieved sometime before 624 A.D. driving out the then ruling dynasty.

The exact period upto which *Manchanabhaṭṭāraka* the son of *Mādhavavarma* ruled is rather difficult to fix precisely. Since the *Chālukyan* conquest of *Vēngi* and its annexation was not accomplished before 624 A.D., it is reasonable to presume that there was a semblance of *Viṣṇukunḍin* authority over *Vēngi Maṇḍala* between 610 and 624 A.D. During this period *Manchanabhaṭṭāraka* must have strived to maintain his hold over his ancestral dominion. However, fortune did not favour him. His own vassals seemed to have tried to take advantage of the disturbed condition by asserting their independence.

If the information supplied by *Kaṭlaparru* grant of *Guṇaga Vijayāditya* can be relied upon, then *Satyāśraya*'s younger brother *Viṣṇuvardhana* destroyed the *Durjayas* and obtained *Vēngi Maṇḍala*. The *Pamdipāka* grant of *Chālukya Bhīma* is more specific about these incidents. The *Durjayas* are said to have occupied *Vēngi Viṣaya*, presumably ousting their overlords, the *Viṣṇukunḍins*.

Thus ended the glory of *Viṣṇukunḍin* family in *Vēngi* country. Nothing is heard of *Manchannabhaṭṭāraka* or his successors till about the 12th and 13th centuries² and the country passed under the *Chālukyas* of *Vēngi*.

Viṣṇukunḍins were not only great conquerors but also great patrons of literature and art. Learned *Brāhmaṇas* were encouraged by gift of lands and *ghaṭikāsthānas* which were established for the propagation of Vaidika studies. We get references to Vedic scholars like *Śivasarma* of *Kausika Gōtra*, a native of *Kuṇḷuru* in *Karmaraṣṭra* (Medikondur in Guntur District?) who is described as '*Veda chatuṣṭaya-samāmnāt-avadat-ananye svakarmānuṣṭāna arāya* etc., (Polomburu plates line 25-26) and *Agnisarma* and *Īśvarasarma* who were said to be '*yama niyama svādhyāya sampannābhyam*' etc. which speak highly about the achievements of *Brāhmaṇas* and their devotion to *Vaidika* studies and *Karmānuṣṭāna*, ordained for them in the Vedas. This, they could follow, because the rulers were also great believers in the efficacy of *Sanātana-dharma*. The rulers not only strived to pursue the *dharma*s but also patronised those that believed and practised them, thereby earning for themselves the title '*Vidva-dvija, guru, viprā Vṛiddha, Tapasvī Janāśrayah*', etc.

They were staunch believers in Brahmanical Hinduism who took delight in performances of Vedic sacrifices like *Agniṣṭōma*, *Vajapēya*, *Asvamēdha* and even *Puruṣa*

1. Aihole inscription of *Pulakēsin-II*, V-26-28, Ep. Ind Vol., IV, P. 11.

2. Bharathi M. S. Sarma.

mēdha. They also observed the *Mahādānas* which are enumerated in detail in their records. They were themselves great believers in *Vaidika Dharma* and took pride in styling themselves as '*susthira karma mahārājah*'.

The family of *Viṣṇukunḍins* appears to be worshippers of *Śiva*. This is borne out by their records which invariably start with the salutations to *Śiva*-the Lord of *Śrīparvata*-i.e. *Mallikārajuna* of *Śrīsailam*. Their partiality towards *Śiva* is also made clear from the grant made by *Vikramēndra Varma* in favour of *Triambaka* alias *Somagiriśvaranātha Śiva* on the banks of *Kṛṣṇa*. This need not necessarily be construed that they were sectarian in their outlook. They seem to have allowed absolute freedom for the followers of other creeds particularly, Buddhism.

Buddhism as we know was the most favoured and popular religion in the coastal Andhra during the early centuries of Christian era. It was favoured by the *Śātavāhanas*, who built numerous edifices to the religion of *Gautama* at *Dhānyakaṭaka* (modern *Amarāvati* near Guntur) and at *Vijayapuri* (modern *Nāgārjunakoṇḍa*). *Ikṣvākus*, the political successors of *Śātavāhanas* in *Śrīparvata* area also continued the high traditions of their erstwhile overlords renovating and enriching Buddhist institutions at *Vijayapuri*, their capital. Buddhism thrived and flourished in Andhra because of their active patronage. Though the successors of *Ikṣvākus* were not Buddhists, they did not seem to have done anything which endangered the cause of Buddhism. The same policy seems to have been followed by *Viṣṇukunḍins* also. One of the stone inscriptions found at *Amarāvati* refers to a certain *Simhavarma*, ruler of *Kānchi*, his visit to *Dhānyakaṭaka*, Buddhist monastery, when he was ordained as a Buddhist.

This king is said to have installed an image of *Buddha* studded with precious stones in the *Vihāra*. This visit of a *Pallava* king to the monastery at *Dhānyakaṭaka* took place during the *Viṣṇukunḍin* rule. At a slightly later period in the middle of 7th Century, Huen Tsang not only visited *Dhānyakaṭaka* but stayed there in that *Vihāra* for a sufficiently long period.

Viṣṇukunḍin period was also famous, as has been alluded to earlier, for their rock cut architecture. The cave temples in and around Bezvada, the *Akkanna Mādanna* group in the *Indrakila* hill, the *Śiva Tāṇḍava*, *Durga* and other group at *Mogalrajapuram* and even the rock cut cave of *Uṇḍavalli* owe their existence to the helping hand of *Viṣṇukunḍin* monarchs.

IPUR PLATES OF GŌVINDAVARMA'S SON MĀDHAVAVARMA

Epigraphia Indica Vol. XVII, p. 334

Prof. E. Hultzsch, Ph.D.

Owner : Brindavanam Gopalacharlu, Ipur, Tenali Taluk, Guntur District.

Measurement : $6\frac{3}{4}'' \times 1\frac{3}{4}''$

Seal: Divided into 2 halves, lower part contains the legend “*Śrī Mādhavavarma*” and the the other half seems to contain a figure of *Lakshmi* or a *Svastika* on a pedestal, flanked by two lampstands (it looks more like a trident or ‘*Nandipāda*’ than a *Svastikā* or seated *Lakshmi*).

The language particularly in the dating portion betrays *Prakrit* influences (*Saptatrise* : *gimha* or *grīṣma* etc.)

Subject matter of the grant : Registering the gift of a village of *Vilembali* in the *Guddādī-vishaya* to the *Brāhmaṇa Agnisarma* of *Vatsa gōtra* for the increase of the prosperity of the family.

(*Asmadvamsa vibhūtyartham*).

Donor : ..*bhagavacchrīparvvatasvāmipādānuddhyātasya Viṣṇukunḍināmāparimitabalaparākramasya paramadhārmikasya pranatasakalasāmantasyā - nēka gōhiranya bhūmi pradānasya mahārājasya Śrī Gōvindavarmmanah putrah srutimatibalasatvadhairyya-vīryyavinayasampannah sakalamahimaṇḍa (la) ma (nu) japati (pra) tipūjitasāsanah Trivaranagarabhavangatayuvatihṛdayanandanah sva (na) yabalamvijitasakalasām-antātulabala-vinaya-naya-niyama satva sampannah sakalajagadavanipatipratipūjitā-sāsanah agniṣṭōmasahasrayājī hi(ra) nyagarbbhaprasūtah ēkādasāsavamēdhāvabhṛuthā-vādhūtajagatkalmaṣaḥ susthirakarmma (-) mahārājasrī Mādhavavarmma.....*

Place of issue : *Vijayaskandhāvārāt*

Kudavāḍa Vāsaka in Gudda Viṣaya

Date of issue : 37th year of the reign 15th day of the 7th fortnight of *grīṣma*.

Ājñapati or the executor of the grant is the king's dear son *Manchaannabhaṭṭāraka*.

General Remarks :

The alphabet is of an earlier type than that of *Rāmatirtham* and *Chikkulla plates*,

APPENDIX I – DETAILS OF THE COPPER PLATE GRANTS OF VIṢṆUKUṆḌIN KINGS

IPUR PLATES OF MĀDHAVAVARMA-II

Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XVII, p. 337
Prof. E. Hultzsch, Ph. D.

Owner : Brindavanam Gopalacharlu, Ipur, Tenali Taluk, Guntur District.

Size of the Plates : 7"×1½" (three plates)

Weight : 30 tolas.

Seal : Contains the legend *Śrī Mādhavavarma*.

The language of the record is *Sankrit* but *Prakrit* form of some words like *vasa* (for *varṣa*) have been retained.

Subject of the grant : Grant of the village, the name of which is uncertain to *Agnisarṃa* and *Indrasarṃa* etc.

Donor : *ēkādasāsvamēdhāvabhṛuthāvadhauta-jagatkalma (ṣa) syāgniṣṭōmasahasrayājīnōnēka-sāmāntamakuṭamaṇīkhacitacaraṇayugaḷa - kamalasya mahārājasya Śrī Mādhava-varṃmaṇah priyanaptā kṣattriyāvaskandapra (vartti) tāpratimavi (khyā) taparākramasya Śrī Dēvavarṃmaṇah priyaputtras-Trikūṭamalayādhīpatirṃmayavinaya-satvasam-pannō bhagavacchriparvvatasvāmipādānuddhyātō Viṣṇu — Śrī (M) ādha (vava)ṃma*.

Donee : Illegible.

Date : Sam 40+7 Va. P. 7 Di-7

General : The inscription is badly worn out and the letters defaced. The extant portions of the alphabet resemble the script of the British Museum plates of *Chārudēvi*. (Epigraphia Indica Volume VIII, Page 143) and appear to be earlier than that of the *Ipur* plates of *Mādhavavarma*, son of *Gōvindavarma*.

Trikūṭa Malaya : Has been understood by Prof. Hultzsch as the name of the mountain *Trikūta* and *Malaya*—mountains in Bombay and Western Ghats respectively.

Sri B. V. Krishna Rao has identified this *Trikūṭa Malaya* with *Kōṭappakoṇḍa* in Narasaraopet Taluk of Guntur District.

RĀMATĪRTHAM PLATES OF INDRAVARMA

Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XII, p. 133.
Prof. E. Hultzsch, Ph.D.

Owners : A family of pandits of Rameti near Vijayanagaram in Visakhapatnam Dt.

Measurements of plates : 8¼"×2" (3 in number).

Seal : Oval in shape, measures 1½"×1¾" in diameter and contains a representation of an advancing lion (facing the proper right) with its left forepaw raised, neck erect, mouth wide open, and the tail raised above the back so as to end in a loop.

The language of the record is *Sanskrit*-prose with four verses of *Vyāsa* and *Manu* quoted at the end.

Subject : The inscription records that the king (*rājan*) *Indravarma* granted to a *brāhmaṇa* the village of *Pēruvāḍaka* in the *Palakirāṣṭra - Palakirāṣtre - Pēruvāḍakagrāma*.

Place of issue : *Puraṇi Sangamēvāsaka Puraṇisamgamavāsakāt*’.

Donor : *bhagacchriparvvatasvāmi padānuddhyāta (h) sakalamahīmaṇḍalāvanatasāman-tama-kūṭamaṇīkīraṇāvalīdhacharaṇayugō vikhyātayasah śrīmanmahārāja Mādhava-varma (1) tasyorjjitasrīviṣṇukuṇḍipārtthivōditōditānvayatīlakaṣamudbhūtaikadaśā-svamēdhāvabhṛitāvadhauta-jagatkalmaṣakratuśahasray(ā) jīnah snānapuṇyōdakapavi-trikṛita sirasah sratputrō matripitripādānuddyatōbhayavaṃsātmaajālaṇkārabhūtah śrīmān - Vikkramēndrākhyā rājasyapi chānēka-chaturddantasamarasatasahasrasaṇ-ghattavijayī priyasūnuh chaturudadhīripatimakūṭamaṇīmayukhavich-chhuritapād-āmburuhah paramamāhēśvarah śrīma-Nīdravarṃmākhyā rāja. . . .*

Donee : “*Maṇḍirasagōtrāya Nagnasarṃmaṇe Taittirīyakabrāhmaṇayāchandrātārakamagra-harīkṛityasarvakarabharavīpramukuto. . . .*”

Date of the grant : *matōrājyak(ā)lah Varṣṣanīdravarṃmaṇah saptaviṃsatikam jyeṣṭhamāsa sukḷapakṣasaptamyām dattō grāmam*”.

General : The alphabet resembles that of ‘*Chikkulla* plates of *Vikramadēva Varma*’ (Ep. Ind. Vol. IV, No. 25).

CHIKKULLA PLATES OF VIKRAMENDRAVARMA-II

Epigrahia Indica, Vol. IV. p. 193.

Prof. F. Kielhorn, Ph. D, LL.D., C.I.E., Gottingen.

Owner : Pindi Nammayya of Uppargudem, a hamlet of Amalapuram in Golugonda taluk of the Vizagapatam District, who got this while excavating the earth at the Atikavani tank in the *Chikkulla agrahāra* of the Tuni division of the Godavari. These were later secured by late Jayanti Ramayya Pantulu.

Measurements of plates : 7⅞"×2¼" (five plates)

Seal : Circular, 1¾" in diameter, bears a lion with a raised right forepaw opened mouth and apparently double tail.

The characters belong to the southern class of alphabets and closely resemble those of the Godavari plates of *Rāja Prīthvimūla* (J.B.A.S. Vol. XVI, p. 116 ff.). The language is *Sankrit* mixed with *Prakrit* words.

Subject : Records the gift of village of *Regonram* south-east of the village of *Ravireva* on the bank of Krishnapenna in the *Natripāṭi Viśaya* to the *Sōmagirīśvaranātha* (temple) of *Tryambaka (Śiva)*.

Place of issue : *Vijaya hendulūruvāsakāt (Dendulūru* near Eluru).

Donar : *Śriparvvataswāmi-padānuddhyātō Viṣṇuknṇḍināmm = ēkādas-āsvamēdha āvabhrit-ā-vadhauta-jagadka (tka) lmaṣasya kratu - sahasrayājina (h) sarvvamēdh-āvāpta-sarvvabhūta-svārājyasya bahusuvarṇṇa - pauṇḍarīka - puruṣamēdha - vājapēya-yūdhyā (?) - ṣōḍasi - rājasūya - prāḍhirāja - pr (ā) jāpaty-ā-dy-anēka - vividha - prīthu-guru-vara-sata - sahasra - yājina (h) kratuvar - ānuṣṭhatādhiṣṭhā - pratiṣṭhita - paramēṣṭhit-vasya mahārājasya sakala-jaganmaṇḍala-vimala-guru-pri (pṛi) thu-kṣitipati-makuṭa-maṇi-ga(ṇa) (n) ikar - āvanata - pādayugaḷasya Mādhavavarmaṇa (h) pranaptā Viṣṇu-kunḍiVākāṭa-vāmsa-dvay - ālaṇkṛita - janmanah śrī-Vikramēndravarmmaṇa (h) priya-naptā spu (sphu) ran-nīṣita-nīstriṃsa-prabh-āvabhāvi (sī)t-āsēṣa-jaganmaṇḍa-lādhiṣṭṭi (shṭhi) tasya bhr(ū) bhaṇgakara-vinīrdhūta - samagra - dāyādasya anēka-chaturddanta-samara - saṇghaṭṭa - dvirada - gaṇa - vipula - vijayasya yathāvidhi-vinīryyāpita-ghaṭik-āvāpta-puṇya - saṃchayasya satata-bh (ū) mi-gō-kanyā-hiraṇya - pradāna-pratīlabdha-puṇya - jīvīt-ōpabhōgasya parama (mā) hēśvarasya mahār (ā) jasya śrī-Indrabhaṭṭāraka-varṃmaṇa (h) priya (jyē) ṣṭha-putrō gariṣṭa (shṭhaḥ) saīsava ēva sakala-nṛipaguṇ-ālaṇkṛitasya samyagadhy (ā) rōpita-sakala-rājyabhāra (h) paramamahēśvarō maha-rāja (h) śrī (srī) mān = Vikramēndravarmmā ēvam = ā jñāpayati.*

Date of issue : *Vijayarājya Samvatsarambul 10, Māsapakhan 8, gimha 5*.

Prof. Hultzch assigns the record to the 8th Century A. D.

PULOMBŪRU PLATES OF MĀDHAVAVARMA

R. Subbarao, J. A. H. R. S. Volume VI, Page 17.

Owner : Pendyala Subrahmanya Sastry of Pithapuram discovered these along with the grant of *Jayasimha-I*, the Eastern *Chālukyan* ruler at *Pōlamūru* beside the river *Tulyabhāga* in *Ramachandrapuram* Taluk of East Godavari Dist.

Size : Plates (4) $6\frac{1}{2}" \times 2\frac{1}{2}"$.

Seal : Missing.

Subject : *Mahārāja Mādhavavarma* alias *Janāśraya* granted the village *Polombūru* on the banks of *Daliyavavi* as well as four *Nivartanas* of land in *Mayindavāṭika* a in *Guddavādi Viṣaya* to *Vēdic* scholar *Sivasarmā* native of *Kuṇrūru* in *Kamma-rāṣṭra*, on the occasion of lunar eclipse, after crossing River *Godāvari* with the desire of conquering the Eastern Region.

Donor :*Bhagavat Śrīparvatasvāmi pādānudhyātasya Viṣṇukunḍinām apratihata śāsana-sya svapratāpōpanata sāmanta manujapati maṇḍalasya virahitaripuṣaḍvargasya vidhīndupavitratrivarggasya vibudhapati sādhdya sara vīra vibhava bala parākrama-sya Śrī Vikramahēndrasya sūnō anēka samara saṅghaṭṭa vijayinah paranarapati makuṭa maṇimayūkhāvadhūta ca(ra)ṇayugaḷasya vikramāśrayasya Śrī Gōvindavarma-nah priyatanayah atula (ba) la parākrama yasōdāna vinaya saṁpannō dasasata sakala dharanītala narapatir avasita vividhadivyaś Trivaranagarabhavanagataparamayuvati-jana viharanaratir ananya nṛpati sādharāṇa dāna māna dayā dharma dhṛiti mati kṣānti kānti sauryaudāryya gāmbhīryya prabhṛityanēkaguṇa saṁpajjanita rayasamut-thita bhūmaṇḍala vyāpi vipulayasōh kratu sāhasrayāji hiraṇyagarbhapprasūtah ēkādasāsśvamēdhāvabhṛitha snānavigatajagadēnaskah sarvabhūta parirakṣaṇa cuṇcūh vidvaddvija guru vṛiddha tapasvi Janāśrayō Māharājah Śrī Mādhavavarmā apica niyamaūśanasam satvaṁ kaisavaṁ kānti maindaviṁ udvahannurubhāh bhāti vikramā dāpta bhūribhūh asyasaumahitala nṛpati bhāskarah Paramabrahmaṇyō Mātāpitṛ pādānudhyātah Janāśraya Mahārājah.*

Donees : ..*Vēdavēdaṅgavidō Rudraśarmmaṇō napptrē svapituradhikaguṇādhyaśita tanōh. Dāmasarmmaṇah putrāya Śivasarmmaṇē Gautamasagōtraya Kammarāṣṭra Kuṇrūra vāstavyāya taittirika sabrahmacāriṇē Vēdacatuṣṭayā samāmnātāvadātānanāya sva-karmānuṣṭhānaparāya phālguṇya paurṇamāsyām sōmarāhusagraha nimittē Janāśraya dattiyām.*

APPENDIX II

HIRANYAGARBHA

Mentioned in the scriptural list of *mahādānas*¹ (great gifts), the *Hiranyagarbha* ritual is considered as a very meritorious rite by the performance of which even sins like the *mahāpātakas* could be got absolved, - (*Matsya Purāṇa*, Chapt. 274). The term *Hiranyagarbha* actually refers to *Brahmā*, and the origin of this *Mahādāna* is connected with the *Vaidika mantra* :

हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्तताग्रे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेक आसीत् ।

(RG. X 121, 1-10.)

Detailed descriptions of the rite are available in *Matsya* (Chapt- 275) and *Linga Purāṇas* (Chapt. II 29). The ceremony is to be performed in a *maṇḍapa* specially erected for the purpose, as is also done in the case of other *mahādānas*.²

The main part of this *mahādāna* includes the setting of golden *kuṇḍa* (basin), 72 *angulas* in height and 48 *angulas* in width, of the shape of a *muraja* (tabor) resembling to the interior of an eight-petalled golden lotus. This object, symbolising the *Hiranyagarbha* (golden womb) should be placed over a heap of sesame along with other articles like *ājya*, *kṣīra*, etc.

द्वासप्तत्यङ्गुलोच्छ्रायहेमपङ्कजगर्भवत् ।

त्रिभागहीनं विस्तारमाज्यक्षीराभिपूरितम् ॥

(*Matsya*, Chapt. 275)

1. Certain types of expensive donation-ceremonies which are specified as *mahādānas* include 16 kinds of gifts (vide *Matsya Purāṇa*, Chapt. 294-289, *Agni*, Chapt. 210, and *Linga Purāṇa*, II Chapt. 28 ff.). They are *Tulāpuruṣa*, *Hiranyagarbha*, *Brahmāṇḍa*, *Kalpavṛkṣa*, *Gōsahasra*, *Kāmadhēnu*, *Hiranyasvaratha* (or *Aśvaratha*); *Hēmahastiratha* (or *Hastiratha*), *Pañchalāngala*, *Dharādāna* (or *Haimadharādāna*), *Viśvachakra*, *Kalpalata* (or *Mahākālpa*), *Sapta-sāgara*, *Ratnadhēnu*, *Mahābhūtaghaṭa*. An earlier list in *Agni Purāṇa*, however refers to only 10 *mahādānas*.

कनकाश्वतिला नागा दासीरथ महीगृहाः

कन्या च कपिला धेनुर्महादानानि वै दश ॥

(*Agni* Chapt. 209, 23-24)

It cannot be definitely said that how many of these *mahādānas*, in their specific form are of *Vaidika* association, but certainly they have in certain cases their origin in pre-Christian era as indicated by certain inscriptions. With the beginning of *Paurāṇika* Hinduism the *mahādānas*, probably became more popular amongst the kings.

2. Such *maṇḍapas* can be of different sizes with four doors and a *Vēdi* containing nine or five *kuṇḍas* (sacri-ficial pits).

Thereafter the golden basin with the chanting of the *mantras* is identified with the *Hiranyagarbha* i.e. the creator. *Matsya Purāṇa* gives the following *stuti* in this connection.

नमो हिरण्यगर्भाय हिरण्यकवचाय च ।
 सप्तलोकसुराध्यक्ष्यजगद्धात्रे नमो नमः ॥
 भूलोकप्रमुखा देवास्तवगर्भे व्यवस्थिताः ।
 ब्रह्मादयस्तथा देवा नमस्ते विश्वधारिणे ॥
 नमस्ते भुवनाधार ! नमस्ते भुवनाश्रय !
 नमो हिरण्यगर्भाय गर्भे यस्य पितामहः ॥
 यतस्त्वमेव भूतात्मा भूते भूते व्यवस्थितः ।
 तस्मा न्मामुद्धराशेषदुःखसंसारसागरात् ॥

(*Matsya*, Chapt. 295)

The performer then should enter the golden basin and sit there facing north, carrying in his hand images of *Dharmarāja* and *Brahma* for five breaths. He should place his head between his knees¹

जानुमध्ये शिरः कृत्वा तिष्ठेत् श्वासपञ्चकम् ॥

(*Matsya*, Chapt. 275)

Next the *Purōhita* chants the *mantras* of the first four *samskāras* viz., *Garbhādāna*, *Pumsavana* and *Simantonnayana*, all suggesting a symbolic rebirth. The donor then with the permission of the *Guru* or *Purōhita* comes out of the golden basin to the accompaniment of auspicious music.

Matsya Purāṇa says

गर्भाधानं पुसंवर्नं सीमन्तोन्नयनं तथा ।
 कुर्युर्हिरण्यगर्भस्य ततस्ते द्विजपुङ्गव ॥
 गीतमङ्गलघोषेण गुरुस्थापयेत् ततः ।
 जातकर्मादिकाः कुर्यात् क्रियाः षोडश चापराः ॥

(Chapt. 275)

The remaining twelve *samskāras* are to be performed symbolically by the donor while chanting the hymns to *Hiranyagarbha* ("formerly I was born from my mother but only as a mortal, now being born of you, I shall assume a divine body"):

मात्राहं जनितः पूर्वं मर्त्यधर्मा सुरोत्तम ।
 त्वद्गर्भसम्भवाद्देव दिव्यदेहो भवाम्यहम् ॥

(*Matsya* Chapt. 275)

1. This resembles the position of the infant in mother's womb. The purpose of this ceremony is to symbolise a new (pure and divine) birth.

After this, the donor takes a ceremonial bath (*Avabhṛitha*) sitting on a golden seat and distributes the golden vessel among the *Guru* and other priests.

ŚŌDAŚIN

Śōḍasin is one of the seven forms of *Sōma* sacrifice according to *Sūtras*. Persons desirous to attain vigour (prowess) perform this sacrifice (*Ap.* XIV. 1.2). In some respects it is more elaborate than *Ukthya*, another *Sōma* sacrifice. In it a *stōtra* for *Śōḍasin* cup, made from *Khadira* wood, sung about the sunset, after the *adhvaryu* gives a piece of gold to *Sāma*-singer. Purchase of *Sōma* is done in exchange for a short-sized cow with red ears. A goat is then slaughtered as sacrifice to *Indra* in addition to others in this ritual. A reddish-brown horse or a female mule is generally prescribed as *dakṣiṇa*.

ĀSVAMĒDHA

This celebrated traditional sacrifice has a very ancient, though obscure origin. It finds mention in *Rig Vēda* wherein details (Hymns No. 162-163 in the 1 *maṇḍala* of *Rig Vēda*) about placing of the goat in front of the horse (*Rig.* 162-2-3 and 163-12), decoration of the sacrificial animal smearing it with *svaru* (*Rig.* I 162-9), and its perambulations round the fire (*Rig.* I. 162-4) covering the body of the dead horse with a golden mantle (*Rig.* I, 162, 16), description of *ukha* in which the flesh of the sacrificed horse was cooked (*Rig.* I, 162, 13) and the offering of horse's flesh *āguh*, *yājya* and *vaṣaṭkāra* were uttered (*Rig.* I, 162, 15), the deification of horse and its identification with *Āditya*, *Trita* and *Yama* (*Rig.* I, 163, 2) etc., are supplied.

In later Vedic age, however, with the growing ritualism this rite also seems to have gained popularity. At one place the *Tait. Br.* (III. 8. 9.) identified the *Asvamēdha* with the kingdom or nation (राष्ट्रं वा अश्वमेधः) - and says परा वा एष सिच्यते योऽबलोऽश्वमेधेन यजते यदमित्रा अश्वं विन्देरन् हन्येतास्य यज्ञः (he, who is weak, offers an *Asvamēdha* indeed is thrown away (split away)). If the enemies (of the sacrificer) were to secure the horse, the sacrifice would be destroyed.)

This ritual should be performed by a *Sārvabhauma* (paramount sovereign) or by a crowned king who is not a *Sārvabhauma* (*Lāt.* IX, 10, 17). According to *Āsv.* X, 6, I, *Ap.* XXI, 1, one who desires to secure all the objects, to win all the victories and to attain all prosperity may perform the *Asvamēdha*. सर्वान् कामानाप्स्यन् सर्वा विजितीर्विजिगीषमाणः सर्वा व्युष्टीर्व्याशीष्यन्नश्वमेधेन यजेत । *Mahābhārata* says that *Asvamēdha* purifies a person of all sins 'अश्वमेधो हि राजेन्द्र पावनः सर्वपाप्मनाम् ।' (Chapt. 71, 16).

Asvamēdha should begin on the 8th or 9th day of *Śukla Pakṣa* of *Phālguna* or on same days of *Jyēṣṭha* or *Āṣāḍha* according to certain text (*Kāt.* XX, 1, 2-3 *Lāt.* IX, 9, 6-7). But *Āp.* prescribes the full moon day of *Chaitra* (XX. 1-4) as the day of its commencement. *Bramaudana* (rice) from four vessels, four *añjalis* and four handfuls cooked and then smeared with ghee are given to four principal priests with one thousand cows each and

gold weighing one hundred berries (*Kāt.* XX 1-4-6, *Lāt.* 9.8). The *iṣṭis* are performed for *Agni-Mūrdhanvan* and *Pūṣan* (*Āśv.* X 6.2-5 *Kāt.* XX. 1.25). The *yajamāna* cuts off his hair, pares his nails, brushes his teeth, bathes and wears new *cīvaras* and a gold ornament (*niṣka*) and observe silene (*Tait. Brā.* III 8,) (*Ap.* XX.4.9.14). His four queens beautifully adorned and wearing (*niṣkas*) come near the king; the crowned (principal) queen with princesses, the second one (*Vāvātā*, the favourite queen) with daughters of *Kṣatriyas*, the third (*Parivṛiktī*, discarded queen), with daughters of *sūtas* and village headmen and the fourth (*Pātāgali*, of low origin) with daughters of *Kṣattṛis* (Chamberlains) and *Sangrahitṛis*. Entering the fire-hall, the *yajamāna* takes his seat to the West of *gārhapatya* with his face to north.

The Horse (*Sāt. Br.* XIII 4.2-4, *Kāt.* XX 1.29-35 *Lāt.* IX. 9-4) should be all white with dark circular spots and of a great speed or should be with front part of the body as dark and remaining part as white or it may have a tuft of dark-blue hair.

Four principal priests standing in four directions each (from the east), respectively, surrounded by a hundred princes, by a hundred *ugras* who are not kings, by *sūtas* and village headmen and by chamberlains and *Sangrahitṛis*, sprinkle sacred water on the horse (*Ap.* XX 4 Sat. 1. 31). A dog with four eyes (two natural and two depressions above eyes) is killed by a man of *āyogava* caste or by a voluptuary with the pestle of *Śṛidharaka* wood. Then the horse is made to enter the waters and the corpse of the dog is made to float under it with a loop of reeds (*Ap.* XX 3.6-13 *Kāt.* XX 1.38 *PP. Sat.* XIV 1.30-34). The horse is brought near the fire and offerings are made thereon till the water ceases to drip down from its body (*Kāt.* XX. 2.3.5). A girdle of *munja* grass or *darbhas*, 12 or 13 *aratnis* long and smeared with *ājya*, that remains after being poured over the *brahmundana*, is invoked with the *mantra-imām agribhṇam rasanām ritasya* (*Tait. S.* IV. I. 2.1., *Vāj. S.* 22. 22) and the horse is bounded with it after taking the permission of the *brahma* priest. Subsequent to the sprinkling of water on the horse and repetition in its right ear several appellations for a horse by the performer, it is let off to roam over in the company of 400 guards with *mantra* 'O gods, the guardians of quarters protect this horse, (*Vāj. S.* 19 and *Taitt. S.* VII. 1. 12. 1). During the period of one year the horse is allowed not to go back and is prevented from associating with mares or plunging into water (*Kāt.* XX 2. 12-13.). Each day during the absence of the horse three *iṣṭis* are offered to *Savitṛi* in morning, mid-day and evening under three different names, respectively, *Satyaprasava*, *Prasavitṛi*, *Āsavitṛi* (*Āśv.* X 6-8, *Lāt.* IX 9. 10, *Kāt.* XX 2. 6). When the *prayāja* offerings are made, a *brāhmaṇa* (other than the priests) with a *Vīṇa* recites three laudatory *gīthas* composed by himself in the honour of the king stating—"you denoted this, performed such and such sacrifice and prepared food for distribution." This is done thrice a day after each *iṣṭi* to *Savitṛi* (*Sat. Br.* XIII, 4. 2. 8. 14, *Taitt. Br.* III 9. 14). A *kṣatriya* lute player also chanted three

laudatory verses referring to the battles fought and victories achieved by the sacrificer (*Sat. Br. XIII, 1. 5. 6, Ap. XX 6. 14*).

For a year every day after the *iṣṭi* to *Sāvitrī* is finished, the *hotṛi* sitting on a golden cushion to the south of *āhavanīya* fire recites to the crowned king surrounded by his sons and ministers the narrative, called *Pariplava* (revolving legends). At the beginning of *Pariplava* the *hotṛi* summons the *adhvaryu* and he sitting on golden seat then responds with 'hotṛ' (*Āśv. X. 6-10-13*). Others attending this part of the ceremonial besides the priests occupying cushions or boards include bands of singers holding lutes who sing the good deeds of the king and his ancestors (*Ap. XX 31-2*).

During the period of the ceremony¹ the *adhvaryu* becomes the king with the declaration of the performer '0 *brāhmaṇas* and nobles this *adhvaryu* is your king, whatever honour you (usually pay to me) should be paid to him. May whatever he does he regarded as done by me (*Āśv. X. 7, 1-10*). Each day for a year in *āhavanīya* fire four oblations are made in the evening (*Kat. XX. 3. 4*). (*Ap. XX. 6. 5, Kat. XX. 27*) Fortynine *hōmas* called *Prakramas* are to be done in the *dakṣiṇā* fire on the first day commencing with ह्रींकाराय स्वाहा (*Vāj. 5. XXII-7-5*). During this entire period the sacrificer has to keep observances as in *Rājasūya* (*Lāt. IX 9. 14*) and huge fees are to be paid to *hotṛi*, *adhvaryu* and singers (*Lat. XI. 9. 12-13 and Kat. XX. 3. 7*)

With the return of the horse after a year when it is brought to a stable, the sacrificer is to undergo a *dikṣa* (initiation). There are 12 *dikṣas*, 12 *upasads* and 3 *sutya* (*Sōma*, pressing) days (*Sat. Br. XIII 4. 4. 3, Āśv. X. 8. 1, Lāt. IX. 9. 17*). When the *dikṣa* is over, the *yajamāna* is sung as on par with gods and on the pressing days, at the time of *avabhṛitha-udayanīya iṣṭi* the *anubandhya* and the *udvāsaniya* he is spoken as on a par with *Prajapati*

विसृष्टवाची यजमाने सम्प्रेष्यति वीणागणकिनोदैवरियं यजमानं संगायतेति । एवं सदौपवसथात् । प्रजापतिना सुत्यास्तवभृधोदयनी यान्वन्ध्योदवसानीयास्विति ।

(*Āp. XX 7. 14-16*)

There are 21 *yūpas* (stakes) each with a height of 21 *aratnis* (cubits) of different trees, some of them being *Rajjudala* (central *yūpa*), pine, *Bilva*, *Khadira* and *Palāsa* (*Tait. Br. III, 8, 9. Sat. Br. XIII. 4. 4. 5, Āp. XX 9. 6. 8, Kat. XX. 4-16-20*). Large number of the animals tied at all these stakes are slaughtered. *Vāj. S.* gives a list of 100 animals, out of which

1. *Pariplava* consists of several cycles of 10 days covering the whole year, in each cycle certain prescribed texts are recited one after the other in an order, and this continues for the whole year. The following gives the idea of *Pariplava* recital :

प्रथमेऽहनि मनुवैवस्वतस्तस्य मनुष्या विशस्त इम आसत इति गृहमेधिन उपसमानीताः स्युस्तानुपत्युचो वेदः सोऽयमिति सूक्तं निगदेत् । द्वितीयेऽहनि यमो वैवस्वतस्तस्य पितरो विशस्त इम आसत इति स्थविरा उपसमानीताः स्युस्तानुपदिशति यजुर्वेदो वेदः सोयमित्यनुवाकं निगदेत् ।

(*Āśv. X. 7. 1-2*)

those from *Kapinjalala* onwards (*Vāi.* S. XXIV. 20 FP) are let off after carrying fire around them (*Kāt.* XX 69 *Ap.* XX 17. 5). The horse to be sacrificed is yoked along with three horses to a *ratha*, and the *adhvaryu* and *yajamāna* who occupy it take it to a lake or water reservoir and push the horse inside the water (*Kāt.* XX 5. 11–14). On its return to *yajña-bhūmi* it is anointed with clarified butter, respectively on its front, middle and hind part by the crowned, favourite and discarded queens, who also respectively put 101 golden beads on the head, mane and tail with *bhuh*, *bhuvah*, *svah* (अभ्रश्यमानान्मणीसौवर्णनिकशतमेकशतं केशपुच्छेषु आवयन्ति भूर्भुवः स्वरिति' [*Kāt* 23-8] Commentrator adds भूरितिमहिषो अश्वस्य शिरोरोमसु भुव इति वावाता ग्रीवारोमसु स्वरितिपरिवृक्ता पुच्छरोमसु') They give remnants of last night's offering to the horse (*Vag.* S. XXIII 8). Near the *yūpa* certain ceremonial dialogue take place between *hotr* and *Brāhmaṇa* priest. The horse is praised repeatedly.

SACRIFICE OF THE HORSE

A piece of cloth is spread over the grass on which are placed a mantle and piece of gold and finally thereon is kept the body of the sacrificed horse. The queens go around thrice the dead body of the horse from left to right with '*gaṇānāmtva*', thrice from right to left with '*priyānāmtva*' and again thrice from left with *nidhināmtva*. They fan the dead horse with their garments while braiding their hairs of right side, loosening the hairs of the left and hit their left thighs with their right hand. The crowned queen unites with the dead horse by lying along its side, and both are covered with mantle already referred to. Thereafter, according to (*Kāt.* XX. 6. 18) obscene abusive-dialogue takes place between the queens and four principal priests with chamberlains and according to *Asva* (X. 8. 10. 13) between the crowned queen and *hotr*, and the *brahma* priest and favourite queen also indulge in a similar dialogue. The attendant princesses raise the queen from near the horse with "*dadhikravnnō*". The horse is cut up with golden, silver and iron needles by three queens respectively (*Vāi.* S. XXIII, 33-38). They take out the fat of the horse. The blood of the horse is cooked and offered at the end of other offerings to *Sviṣṭakṛit*. Prior to the offering of the animal's meat for *Prajāpati*, there is theological dialogue (*brahmōdya*) between priests and *sadas*.

Offerings of *vapa* of all the slaughtered animals are made to different dieties of whom the *Prajāpati* is the last. Thereafter the king sits on a lion or tiger skin and a piece of gold is placed on his head (*Rig.* I. 90. I) and over his head is spread a bull's hide. He is sprinkled with the remaining part (*saṃsrāva*) of the offerings called as *mahiman*. Offerings are also made to all the seasons and months. The final purificatory bath by the sacrificer is performed on the third pressing day. At the end of *avabhṛitha iṣṭi* an offering (3 according to *Ap.* XX. 22. 6) is made on the head of a bald headed man suffering from white-leprosy with yellowish eye balls, and prominent teeth with the words to *Jumbakāyasvāhā*. (*Vāj.* S. XXV. 9). He should belong to *Atri-gōtra* and should enter

such deep water that it should reach his mouth, according to *Kāt.* XX 8. 16 *San.* XXI. 18 18 and *Sat.* XIV. 5. 4). The *āhuti* to *Jumbaka* (*Varuṇa*), is the last in *Aśvamēdha* (*Taitt. Br.* III 9. 5). This man is given 100 cows and cart yoked with bulls. After the *yajamāna* comes out of the waters, that water is considered as the purest and persons guilty of grave sins (*mahāpātakas*) like the murder of a *brāhmaṇa* become purified by taking a dip in it without necessary penance.

IN HISTORICAL TIMES

In history in the present state of our knowledge *Pushyamitra* of the *Sunga* dynasty is known to us as the earliest performer of *Aśvamēdha*. The subsequent performers are the *Āndhra-Sātavāhanas* (*Nānaghat* Inscription), the *Bharasivas* (performed 10 horse-sacrifices), King *Silavarma* (4th Cent. A.D.) of *Varṣagaṇa gōtra*, (celebrated four *Aśvamēdhas*), *Ikṣvākus* and *Viṣṇukundins*, *Pallavas*, *Kadambas*, *Vākātakas*, *Guptas* (*Samudragupta* and *Kumāragupta*) and *Chālukyan* king *Pulakēśin* (*Ins.* of A.D. 757 refers). The most keen performer of this great *Vaidika* sacrifice was probably king *Jayasingh* (*Sawāi*) of *Jaipur* in 18th century.

PURUṢAMĒDHA

The *Puruṣamēdha* as indicated by its very name is a ritual wherein human beings are offered as sacrificial victims, like the horse in *Aśvamēdha*. The roots of such a sacrifice, as most of the scholars feel, are supposed to be in the pre-*Vedic* cultures of the Indo-Europeans. And in some form, the idea of *Puruṣamēdha* amongst the earlier hymns also occurs in the *Puruṣasūkta* of *Ṛig Vēda* which refers to the creation of the universe on account of the sacrifice of *Puruṣa Prajāpati* by the gods (*Rv.* X. 90. 15). The rite is celebrated with a view to obtaining everything and surpassing all beings. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* says that *Puruṣa Nārāyaṇa* by performing *Puruṣamēdha* could surpass all beings in virtues and excellence (*S. B.* XIII 6. II). In *Satyāṣāḍha Śrautasūtra*, it is stated that the purpose behind the sacrifice is to excel others and to secure independence and political supremacy. यः कामयेत् सर्वान् भूतानां ज्यैष्ठ्यं श्रेष्ठ्यं स्वाराज्यमाधिपत्यं गच्छेयमिति एतेन यजेत् (*Satyāṣāḍha Śraut.* 6. I) *Gōpatha Brāhmaṇa* mentions that by performing *Puruṣamēdha* the performer acquires (wins) the status called *Virāt* (पुरुषमेधेनेष्ट्वा विराडिति नामाधत्त.....*Gōpatha. Bra.* V. 8).

Puruṣamēdha is a kind of *Sōma* sacrifice and it is to be completed in five days. According to *Sat. Bra.*, however, it may be extended to forty days. The performers of *Puruṣamēdha* can only be either a *Brāhmaṇa* or a *Kṣatriya* (ब्राह्मणो राजन्यो वा यजेत् । *Āp. Śraut.* XX, 24. 2). The procedure of *Puruṣamēdha* is said to be similar to that of *Aśvamēdha* पुरुषमेधोऽश्वमेधवत् । (*Vait. Śr.* VII. 37. 10). The sacrifice comprises of 23 *dikṣas*, 12 *upasads* and 5 *sutyās* (or *Sōma*-days) त्रयो विंशतिर्दक्षाः । द्वादशोपसदः । पञ्चसुत्याः । (*Sat. Śraut.* XIV. 6.3). Of it the *Agniṣṭōma* is the first day, an *ukthya* the second, an *Atirātra* the third, another *ukthya* the fourth, and another *Agniṣṭōma* the fifth day. Its principal rite is the central *Atirātra*, and the main victims of *Puruṣamēdha* are to be sacrificed on that day. Though analogous to *Aśva-*

mēdha, the procedure of this sacrifice has certain additions in the case of preliminary rites. In the beginning the offerings are to be made to *Agnikāma* (desire), *Agnidātṛi* (the giver) and *Agnipathikṛit* (the path-maker) (*San. Śraut.* XVI-10,4-8 and *Vait. Śrau.* VII, 37. 12). The victim, a *Brāhmaṇa* or a *Kṣatriya* should be purchased for 1000 cows and 100 horses. According to text, one who intends to offer himself for this purpose may come forward and accept the fixed price of the cows and horses. In case none of the subjects of the king gets ready, the nearest enemy should be conquered and caught as the victim. The said price may be given to the relations of the person to be sacrificed. The proposed victim being bathed and adorned is set free for one year. During this period he is not supposed to commit any breach of chastity. Offering to *Anumati*, *Pathyāsvasti* and *Aditi* are made for the entire year. (अथानुमयते पथ्यायै स्वस्तयेऽदितय इति सम्बत्सरं हवींषि ।) (*Śāṅkhyāyana Śraut* XVI, 10-11)

Three daily oblations to *Saviṭri* according to *Sāṅk. Śraut* should also be performed in the reverse order. Animal offering at the end of year should be made to *Indra Pūṣan*. (ऐन्द्रा पौष्णपशुः (*Vait. Śra.* VII, 3-721).

The number of *yūpas* in most of the texts is prescribed as 11 but *Sāṅk Śraut* refers to 25 *yūpas* each of which should be 25 cubits long. The *Vaitāna Śraut.* states the number as one, but *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* and certain other texts mention the slaughter of 11 victims, sacred to *Agni* and *Soma*, on 11 stakes on the *upavasatha* day. *Sāṅk Śraut* gives the number of victims as 25. The *Śat. Brā.* further lays down that on the *sutyā* days there should be *Savanīya* victims of the set of 11 *yūpas*.

The most important part of the sacrifice takes place on *Atirātra* (third) day. According to *S. Bra.* the human victims should be distributed thus over 11 *yūpas*; 48 victims to central stake and 11 to each of the remaining 10 *yūpas* and besides this 8 victims for *Prajāpati* are also taken for sacrifice. The total number of the victims thus is 166. However, the number differs in various texts.

Fire is carried around the victims (human) (तत्पर्यग्निकृताः पशवोबभूवुरसंज्ञताः,) (*S. B.* XIII. 6-2-12)

who are bound to *yūpas*, but they are not slaughtered. Many human victims are let off after the rite called *Paryagnikaraṇa*, and only 11 victims are slaughtered (*S. B.* XIII, 6-2-15).

The last rite of *Puruṣamēdha* consists of the sacrifice of 11 barren cows sacred to *Mitra*, *Varuṇa* and *Bṛihaspati* according to *S. B.* and *Satyā. Śrau.*, or to *Prajāpati* and *Viśvadēvah* according to *Āpastamba*. The latter also points out that *Abhiṣeka* in this *yajña* is like that of *Asvamēdha* (एताहन्यस्मिन्नेवाध्वमेववदभिषेकः । *Ap. Śrauta Sūtra* XX. 24-14).

The sacrificial victims to *Prajāpati* according to *Śāṅkhyāyana* include a man, a *gomṛiga* and a hornless he-goat. To each of the 25 *yūpas*, 25 victims are slaughtered in the honour

of the seasonal gods (पुरुषोगोमृगोऽजस्तूपरस्ते प्राजापत्या !.....पञ्चदश पञ्चविंशति पञ्चविंशतये चातुर्मास्य देवताभ्यः ।)
(*San. Srau.* XVI 12-14).

For the victims are spread out a garment of *Kusa* grass, a cloth of *tripa* bark and a red silk garment, At the time of the slaughter the *Sāma* addressed to *yama* is recited by the *Udgātri*, and the *Puruṣa-Nārāyaṇa* hymn by *Hotṛ*. Next the *yajamāna* who has caused the slaughter of man is healed up by means of four hymns (अथ यजमानं भिषज्यन्ति *San. Sraut.* XVI. 13-3)

As in *Asvamēdha*, the chief consort of the sacrificer lies with the dead body of the human victim and both are covered with upper garment. Theological discussion on the *sadas* should also take place. After certain other rites are done, some more victims are sacrificed for the seasons.

Kātyāyana, *Āpastamba* and *Satyāśāḍha* state that the gift (*dakṣiṇa*) of *Puruṣamēdha* does not vary from that of *Asvamēdha*. But in *Śatapatha Brā.* we find that besides the land and other property, the people of eastern, southern, western and northern quarters of the kingdom are given respectively to *Hotṛi*, *Brahma*, *Adhvaryu* and *Udgātri* priests, including the *Hotṛikas* (मध्यमप्रतिराष्ट्रस्य यदन्यद् भूमेश्च ब्राह्मणस्य च वित्तात्सपुरुषमप्राचीदिग्धोतुर्दक्षिणा ब्रह्मणः प्रतीच्यध्वर्योऽदीच्युद्गातुस्तदेव होतृकाऽन्वाभक्ताः ।) (S. B. XIII 6. 2. 19)

The same text further says that if the performer is a *Brāhmaṇa*, he should bestow all his property for acquiring the fullest merit.

After performing *Puruṣamēdha*, the *yajamāna* takes (inhales) the two fires (their heat or smoke) inside, and worships sun with *Uttaranārāyaṇa* hymn and proceeds to forest; if he intends to stay in the village he may do so with the repetition of the rites referred to above.

The evidence of *Puruṣamēdha* is available in many texts which belong to post-*Vaidika* period. These besides the Brahmanical scriptures are the Buddhist and Jaina texts. It appears from the Buddhist writings that till the time of *Buddhaghōṣa* the tradition of *Puruṣamēdha* was in vogue, for he gives first hand information of the ritual in his commentary. It is, however, interesting that *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* condemns this ritual and states that the performer of *Puruṣamēdha* goes to hell. This perhaps reflects the changed outlook of the followers of *Purāṇika* form of Brahmanism in later times.

The evidence of the performance of *Puruṣamēdha* has been recently discovered in *Kausāmbi Excavations*¹ and the available data suggests its date about 2nd Century B.C. About the 5th-6th century A.D., some of the *Viṣṇukunḍin* rulers of Andhra also claim to have performed *Puruṣamēdha*.

Outside India the Cho-Pinh Rock epigraphs of *Champa* bear evidence of the celebration of this *yajña*.

1. G. R. Sharma, *Excavations at Kausāmbi* 1957-59, p. 118 ff.

VĀJAPĒYA

A complicated ritual, the *Vājapēya* can be performed by *Brāhmaṇa* or *Kṣatriya* for the attainment of the position of most learned or prosperous man or *svārājya* (position of Indra) respectively. This is supposed to be a variety of *Jyotiṣṭōma*. Its procedure is analogous to that of *Śōḍaśin* (*Ap.* XVIII I. 4) though it has many special features of its own.

Number 17 plays in it the most important part. There are 17 *stotras*, 17 sacrificial animals, 17 cubits long stake, 17 objects as fee, 17 pieces of cloth to cover the *yūpa*. It lasts for 17 days, and has 17 *dikṣas*, 17 cups of wine, 17 cups of *Sōma*, 17 *raths* and 17 drums to be beaten on a particular occasion. The *Vājapēya* should be performed during autumn.

The attractive elements of this sacrifice are race of the chariots, drinking bout of 17 cups and climbing on the *yūpa* by the sacrificer.

The sacrificer, his wife and all the priests are to put on golden chains. The chain worn by the *Hoṭṛ* bears 100 lotus-like-pendants studded with precious stones. These chains are to be given as a part of *dakṣiṇa* to each priest. There are special arrangements prescribed for setting the wine and *Sōma* cups. A cup made of gold containing honey is also to be placed centrally with wine cups. Wine or the material for preparing it, should be taken in exchange for lead from a long-haired man at the time when *Sōma* stalks are purchased. After it is brought inside from southern door it is boiled on *dakṣiṇa* fire (*Kat.* XIV. 1. 14-17). The animals to be sacrificed in *Vājapēya* are a ram (for *Indra*), a barren cow (for *Maruts*) an ewe (for *Sarasvatī*) and 17 hornless, youthful and virile goats of one colour (for *Prajāpati*. (*Ap.* XVIII 2. 12-13 and *Kat.* XIV 2-11-13).

The race of the 17 chariots which starts with the midday is an interesting ritual of the ceremony. The *ratha* of the *yajamāna* is yoked with 3 horses while others have four horses each. The chariots are made to stand to the east of *āhāvaniya* with their yokes to east or north-east. The goal of the race is marked with the shooting of an arrow seventeen times by a *kṣatriya* (*rājaputra*) from a spot between *cātvāla* and *utkara* onwards. The *brahmā* priest fixes a wheel (made of *udumbara* wood) of chariot with 16 spokes between *cātvāla* and the *utkara* and climbs on it. When the wheel is turned from left to right (it is revolved thrice) the *brahmā* recites *Vājīsāman*. According to *Lat.* (V. 12-13) the *brahma* priest only touches the arms of the wheel. The *adhvaryu* also occupies the chariot with *yajamāna* and chants *mantras*. He directs the sacrificer with regard to the recitation of *mantras*. Drums are beaten when the race starts and the horses are made to smell *nivāra caru*, cooked in 17 pots. The *ratha* of the sacrificer leads the race. The *yajamāna* utters the formulae of victory '*agnirēkākṣarēṇa*' (*Vaj.* S. VIII, 31. 34). After reaching the goal, the chariots return to the sacrificial ground and the horses are again made to smell the

caru. A *hōma* is offered for discharging the drums (*duṇḍubhi-vimōcana-hōma*). Each rider of the chariots is given a berry (*kṛiṣṇal*, gold of that weight) which is taken back afterwards and is offered to *brahma* who also takes the golden honey jar.

Thereafter the *adhvaryu* initiates the *Sōma* drinking and he is followed by other priests. Simultaneously the *pratiprasthātri* drinks the main wine cup and other 16 cups are taken by the 16 riders of chariots. *Kāt.* (XIV 3.20, and 4.16), however says that the *Kṣatriya* or *Vaisya* who occupies one of the *rathas* gets all the wine cups.

At the time of chanting of *Mahēndra stōtra*, the *neṣṭri* makes a request to wife of *yajamāna* to put a short undergarment of *darbha*. The sacrificer puts on a silken garment (*tārpyam*) inside the clothes he wears as a *dikṣita*. Then the *yajamāna* with the help of a ladder climbs the *yūpa* and a dialogue ensues between him and his wife. The *yajamāna* says to his wife 'let us ascend to heaven', the wife repeats 'let us ascend'. (*Kāt.* XIV 5.8) mentions that both of them climb to the top of the *yūpa* but according to *Āp.* (XVIII 4.12) only the husband goes to the top. Reaching the summit of the *yūpa* he touches the *chaśāla* of wheat-flour and utters 'we reached the heaven, the gods' (*Tait. S. I. 7.9.2. Vaj. S. IX, 21*). From there he looks around and says 'may I stay long with my children'. At this time *vaisyas* (referred to as *yajamāna's* children in commentary on *Kātyayana*) throw 17 bags of salt or saltish earth to him. But (*Ap.* XVIII 5. 18-16) lays down that the four chief priests with chanting of *mantra* should arrange the bags in a particular way and the *yajamāna* should descend after receiving them. He sits on a couch which is kept on the west of *uttaravēdi* after performing the rite of standing on the hide of a goat. Animals to various gods are offered, and offerings of *nivāra-caru* is made to *Bṛihaspati*. During the mid-day pressing, animals are offered to *Prajāpati*. Offering of different kinds of food, of 17 or more type of grains except one (which the *yajamāna* should not take afterwards in his life) is put in a pot of *udumbara* wood containing water and milk. Offerings 7 in number are made with a *sruva* and the remaining is sprinkled on *yajamāna*. The *adhvaryu* then announces that by performing *Vājapeya* such and such has acquired the status of *samrāt*, and he is entitled to use a white parasol. According to the rules of conduct prescribed for a performer of *Vājapeya* he should act like a *Kṣatriya* and should not rise to receive or do *abhivādana*. He should also not sit on the same seat with one who has not performed the sacrifice.

The *adhvaryu* gets in *dakṣiṇā* the chariot occupied by *yajamāna*, and 16 pieces of cloth which served as the cover of the *yūpa*. Various texts express different opinions with regard to other fees.

PRĀJĀPATYA

It is *Prāyascitta* rite prescribed for a *kṣatriya* to get absolved of serious sins like *agamyāgamana* (cohabiting with a lady with whom it is prohibited), taking wine and beef.

अग्न्यागमनं कृत्वा मद्यगोमांसभक्षणम् ।

शुध्येच्चान्द्रायणाद् विप्रः प्राजापत्येन भूमिपः ॥

(*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, Chapt. 226)

The ritual is composed of a series of observances which are to be continued for 12 days. For the first 3 days the performer should take his meals only in the night (or only in the evening) in 26 morsels. The other three days he is to take unbegged (*ayācita*) food consisting of only 24 morsels. During the last three days the performer must observe complete fast.

RĀJASŪYA

It is the most elaborate of the royal sacrifices, and according to scriptural rules it is to be celebrated after the performance of *Vājpaṇya*. The performer of this *yajña* obtains the title of a king (*Rājan*). It could be performed only by *Kṣatriya*. According to a view (*Kāt.* XV. 1. 2) its celebrator should be one who has not performed *Vājpaṇya*.

In strict sense it is not a *Sōma* sacrifice though it includes *Sōma-yāgas* like *Pavitra*. The ritual continues for a very long period.

The *yajamāna* is consecrated for *Pavitra* sacrifice on the first day of the bright half of *Phālguṇa*. In the next five days following the *Pavitra* sacrifice, five offerings are made, one on each day. On the full-moon day an *iṣṭi* to *Anumati* takes place (*puṛodāsa* is offered) offering to *Nirṛiti* is made out of the grain particles fallen to west from the millstone during the preparation of *Purodāsa*. On the full-moon day of *Phālguṇa* *Cāturmāsya*s are commenced. This continues for full one year. Full-moon and new-moon sacrifices take place between the *parvans* of *Cāturmāsya*s. After one year many rites viz. *Pañcavāṭiya*, the *Apāmārgahōma* etc. are performed. For next 12 days offering named as *Ratninām havimṣi* are done in the jewel-houses (stores) of the king (sacrificer), the army-commander, the *purōhita*, the crowned-queen, the *sūta* (minister), *grāmaṇi* (village-head), the *kṣattri* (Chamberlain), *saṁgrahitṛi* (treasurer), *akṣvāpa* (Superintendent of gambling), *govikartana* (hunter) *dūta* or *pātāgala* (Courier) and discarded queen. The deities to whom homage is paid by 12 participants (beginning with *yajamāna*) are *Indra*, *Agni*, *Bṛihaspati*, *Aditi*, *Varuṇa*, *Marut*, *Savitṛi*, *Asvins*, *Rudra* (for both *akṣavepa* and *govikartana*) *Agni* and *Nirṛiti*.

Then is performed the *Abhiṣēcaniya* ceremony, the principal rite of *Rājasūya*, which lasts for five days. These five days consist of *dikṣā* (for one day), *upasads* (for three days) and *sutyā* or pressing of *Sōma* (for one day). The ceremonial procedure in this case is the same as that of *ukthya*. On the southern part of the sacrificial ground takes place the *dikṣā*, whereas the *Dasapēya* is performed on the northern one. The *abhiṣēcaniya* and *Dasapēya* rites must have the *hotṛi* of *Bhrigugōtra* only. For *Dasapēya* half of the *Sōma* brought for *abhiṣēcaniya* is stored in the house of *brahma* priest. Next *caru* is offered to *Sāvitṛi*, *Agni*, *Gṛahapati*, *Sōma*. *Vanaspati*, *Bṛihaspati*, *Indra*, *Rudra*, *Mitra* and *Varuṇa*. Then *brahma*

priest proclaims in the following words to the *Ratnis* that the *yajamāna* is their king, and he also refers to the people of the country in it.

अथैनं रात्नेभ्य आवेदयत्येष वो भरता राजेति । एष वः कुरवो राजेति कौरव्यम् । एष वः पञ्चाला राजेति पाञ्चालम् ।
एष वः कुरुपञ्चाला राजेति वा कुरुपञ्चालान् । एष वो जनता राजेत्यन्यान् राज्ञः । सोमोऽस्माकं ब्राह्मणानां राजेति ब्रह्मा जपति ।
(*Āp.* XVIII. 12. 7-9)

Different kinds of waters are brought in 17 *udumbara* jars, viz., water of *Sarasvati*, flowing water of a river, water from the ripples (created by the entrance of man or animal), water from a river drawn against its current, water of sea, ocean waves of whirl-pools of deep and steady reservoirs, rain water in sunshine, of a lake, well and frost. These are collected into big jar of some wood kept near the seat of *Maitrāvaruṇa*. Later on when the *Marutvatiya* cup is offered in *ukthya* rite, a tiger skin is spread on the east of water vessel and lead is placed on its western end. Six *hōmas* are performed. The water is then cleansed with the help of the *kusa* blades tied with piece of gold, and it is then distributed in four jars of *Palāśa*, *Udumbara*, *Nyagrodha* and *Asvatha*. The sacrificer wearing a silken cloth, white turban and a mantle chants the *avid*-formulae “*Āvinnagni-grīhapatirāvinna Indro.....āvinne dyāvapṛithivi dhṛitavrate āvinnādevyaititir-viśvarūpyāvin-noyamsāvāmūṣyāyanosyām viśyāsmindraṣṭre mahate kṣatrāya, mahatādhīpatyāya mahate jānārājyāyaiṣa vo bharatā rājā sōmosmākaṁ brāhmanānām rājā*”. (*Taitt. S. I. 8. 12. 2*).

The *advaryu* gives a strung bow and three arrows to *yajamāna* who for averting evil puts a copper piece in the mouth of a long-haired man. (*Vāj. S. X. 10*). The sacrificer, before standing on the tiger skin with a golden fillet on his head and a piece of gold under his foot, treads the lead and brushes it away. He then strides over the four quarters. The *adhvaryu* and other three principal priests sprinkle water from four vessels. In addition, the king's brother or another *kṣatriya*, a friendly *kṣatriya*, a *vaisya*, another *vaisya* (from behind the king) and a friend of the common people also sprinkle the water. During the sprinkling of water the king rules over his whole body with the horn of an antelope. A dice game is also played about this time and before or after that *hotṛi* priest occupying a golden seat recites the story of *Śunaḥsepha*. *Dakṣinā* of a 100 or 1000 cows and golden seats they were occupying is given to *adhvaryu* and *hotṛi*. The king takes three strides (*viṣṇukrama*) on the tiger skin. The remaining water (used in anointing) is handed over to his son by the king. Two *hōmas* known as *nānavyatiṣaṇjaniya* are offered wherein first the son is declared to be the father of his father, but the relationship is put correctly afterwards (*Āp.* XVIII. 16. 14-15). It is followed by a symbolic march for the plunder of cows by the king. He as in *Vājāpeya* marches on a four-horsed chariot to north of *āvahanīya* fire in midst of numerous cows belonging to his kinsmen. He touches them with string of his bow and proclaims that he has seized them. Then he returns to sacrificial ground. He later on restores these cows to the owners and makes offering called *rathavimochanīya*. According to

another text (*Kāt.* 6, 13–23) the cows as well as other kinds of wealth of his kinsmen is seized by the king. One-third of this is given to the priests, one-third is distributed to worthy *brāhmaṇas* at the time of *Dasapēya*, while the remaining one third is returned to the kinsmen who thereafter gain the status of *rajanyas* or noblemen.

The king after getting down from the *ratha* sits on a seat of *Khadira* wood which is kept in front of *agnīdhriya* shed; the *ratnis* and *brāhmaṇas* also sit around him. The *brahmā* priest (the *adhvaryu* or *purōhita* according to *Kat.*) presents *sphya* to the king, thence it passes on to king's brother, *sūta*, *sthapati*, village-headman and kinsmen. A quadrangular hut is built for the game of dice. Five dice are given to king who is lightly struck by the priests with sticks of sacrificial trees. Players are the king and his kinsmen, and according to the arrangements of the play, the best throw comes to king and worst to his kinsmen.

A cake of rice and barley (baked on 12 potsherds) is offered to *Indra* and *Viṣṇu* after offering *anubandhyā* cow and performance *udvasaniya iṣṭi* is over. Offerings, one on each day are to be made following the *Abhiṣēchaniya* for 10 days, to *Saviṭri*, *Sarasvati*, *Tvaṣṭri*, *Pūṣan*, *Indra*, *Bṛihaspati*, *Varuṇa*, *Agni*, *Sōma* and *Viṣṇu*. On each of the 10 *iṣṭis* the king presents to priests a golden or ordinary lotus, and on the last day he wears a garland of those flowers. This is to be treated as his *dikṣā* for next rite called *Dasapēya*.

Dasapēya: The rite *Dasapēya* (ten drinks) owes its name to 10 cups of *Sōma* which are taken by 10 *brāhmaṇas*. The *brāhmaṇas* besides the 10 *ritviks* include 90 others with special type of qualifications. The king has to observe for a year certain rules after the *avabhṛitha* bath in *Dasapēya* viz., he should not plunge for daily bath in the water and should only rub his body with water, should always brush his teeth, pare his nails, should not cut his hair and should sleep in the sacrificial fire-shed on a tiger skin. He should use shoes whenever he goes outside. The subjects of the kings with the exception of *Brāhmaṇas* also should not cut their hair for a year.

Certain minor offerings are also made during this part of the ritual.

Another rite denominated as *kesavapāniya* has the same procedure as that of *Atirātra* ceremony. In this ceremony the hair grown for a year is cut off. There is difference of opinion with regard to its actual date of celebration in various texts. Thereafter take place two rites called *Vyuṣṭi-dvirātra* (an *Agniṣṭoma* and an *Atirātra* performed with the interval of one month). After the second *Vyuṣṭi-dvirātra* a rite known as *Kṣatra-dhṛiti* takes place. About the end of *Rājasūya*, according to the information of *Śat. Brā.*, the *iṣṭi* called *Traidhatavi* is performed. A barley and rice mixed cake is offered. After one month of this *iṣṭi*, another *iṣṭi* called *sautramani* is performed.

The *dakṣiṇā* in *Abhiṣēchaniya* is estimated as 24000 cows (*Asv.* IX. 4. 2. ff). In *Dasapēya* the number has been given as 1000. But besides the cows, many other animals, gold and silver articles, carts etc., are also donated in *Dasapēya*.

APPENDIX III

ROCK CUT CAVES OF THE VIṢṆUKUṆḌIN PERIOD

As has been mentioned already the *Viṣṇukunḍins* were great devotees of *Śiva*, and they seem to have been responsible for the construction of number of temples dedicated to *Śiva*. In and around Vijayawada in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, numerous cave temples have been discovered and they are being protected and maintained by the Department of Archaeology, Government of India as ancient monuments of National importance. Of these the five-storied rock cut cave at *Uṇḍavalli*, the *Akkanna Mādanna* group of caves in the *Indrakila* hill, the solitary cave temple near the Radio Station, and the group of caves in the hills near the village *Mogalrājapuram* are important. Of these the *Mogulrājapuram* group and the *Uṇḍavalli* caves are very interesting as they contain fine sculptures within a well laid out temple plan. The latter is a five storied rock-cut cave which is partly unfinished and contains a huge image of *Viṣṇu* in the reclining form.

The dating and identification of these caves have been a disputed question. Mr. Longhurst who described these caves in his book on *Pallava Architecture*¹ considered them on stylistic grounds as *Pallava* caves and assigned them to the period of *Mahēndravarma Pallava* (c. 610-640 A.D.) But his dating as well as identification of the sculptures are open to doubt. Sri K. R. Srinivasan² who is now conducting a systematic survey of South Indian temples in his report on Indian Archaeology, 1959-60, while agreeing with Mr. Longhurst with regard to the *Pallava* influence in the plan and execution of these caves temples however expressed the opinion, on epigraphical evidence that these cave temples particularly *Uṇḍavalli* and *Akkanna Mādanna* might be the creations of the Eastern *Chālukyas* of *Vēṅgi* and therefore they belong to the period some time about 700 A.D. In the north and north-eastern region of *Pallava* country in what formed the early *Chālukyas* dominion, he

1. A. H. Longhurst : Memories of the Archaeological survey of India No. 17, *Pallava Architecture* p. 24 ff.

2. Indian Archaeology, 1959-60, A Review. p. 83 ff.

discovered a series of four cave temples at *Adavi Sōmanapalli* in the *Manthena* taluk of Karimnagar district. This is said to be identical in type with the *Bhōkardān* cave temple in the Aurangabad district of Maharashtra. The latter cave contains an inscription in archaic Telugu-Kanarese script reading '*Utpatti Pidugu*'. A similar inscription is also found on the facade of *Uṇḍavalli* and *Akkanna Mādanna* caves, near Vijayawada. Hence these two sets of cave temples namely the Vijayawada group and the *Bhōkardān* cave seem to have some connection or perhaps owe their origins to the munificence of the same ruler. It is quite likely that *Chālukyas* who conquered coastal Andhra by about 630 A.D., might have given the final touch to those cave temples which have been started earlier. We know from the inscriptions of the *Chālukyas* that they were worshippers of *Viṣṇu* (*Bhagavannārāyaṇa*, *prasāda samāsādita vara Varāhalānchana* etc.) and naturally they could be expected to build temples for *Viṣṇu* and it was in the fitness of things that they completed and beautified the *Anantasayana* cave at *Uṇḍavalli*.

The group of caves at *Mogalrajapuram* bear a different character. They are mostly dedicated to the Hindu triad, but the principal diety was always *Śiva*, a feature which is perhaps a manifestation of the creed professed by the builder or benefactor. The ruling dynasties of these localities that favoured *Śaivism* were the *Pallavas* and *Viṣṇukunḍins*. Since these cave temples are said to bear close resemblance to the rock cut architecture of *Mahēndravarman* period they have to be dated in the first part of the 7th century. During that period the *Viṣṇukunḍin* were the masters of these tracts round about Vijayawada and not the *Pallavas*. As such these should have been the creations of the *Viṣṇukunḍin* monarchs.

Of these caves at *Mogalrajapuram* near Vijayawada two are prominent for their architecture and sculpture and it may not be out of place to describe them here in greater detail.

DURGA CAVE (Pl. 1)

This cave temple consists of a rock-cut hall measuring 12' × 9' × 15' with the cubical pillar in front dividing it into three openings. Mr. Longhurst who described them says that it has a heavy curved projecting cornice decorated with the dormer window ornament the latter having spade shaped finials above and at the back of the conic are the horizontal pillars. Excavated into the back wall is a shrine 6' × 6' containing a bas-relief of the diety in whose honour this cave temple has been excavated. Mr. Longhurst calls it a relief figure of *Durga*. But a closer examination of this figure has revealed that the identification made by Longhurst was not quite correct. The figure has certain peculiar features which are worthy of study. It has two hands on the right side and only one on the left. The right leg is bent and

kept on a lotus pedestal. One of the right hands is resting on the thigh of the right leg while on the other hand there is an axe or *Paraśu* with a twisted *nāga* decoration. The left hand seems to be holding some round object. Behind the figure is a crude representation of a lion. Sri M. Somasekhara Sarma has identified this figure as an image of *Ardhanārīśvara* and it is perhaps the earliest known icon¹ of that god in Andhra Pradesh. In the same cave four feet long and 2' high niche was also made to enshrine the relief images of *Brahma*, *Viṣṇu* and *Siva*. They are now in a very much decayed condition.

2. ŚIVA TĀṆḌAVA CAVE (PLATE 2)

The other interesting temple in the *Mogalrājapuram* group is the *Śiva Tāṇḍava* cave which is located to the right of the road leading to the village of *Mogalrājapuram* from Vijayawada. Next to *Uṇḍavalli* cave this is perhaps the most richly carved of these cave temples. Unfortunately it has been a victim of wholesale damage by quarrymen who blasted this hill for building materials and road metal. Today very little of that huge mass of hill on the slopes of which this cave was originally excavated remains. The portions of the hill containing the cave has been isolated and the rest of the hill has been completely quarried by the local people. Due to the vibrations caused in the course of blasting operations much of the sculpture work has suffered irreparable damage.

The cave proper consists of a hall 31'-4" × 15'-3". Along the back wall are excavated three shrines, the central one measuring 6' × 6'. This triple celled shrine must have been dedicated to the Hindu trinity, the central chamber relegated to *Śiva* in the shape of a *linga* on the *yonipīṭha* flanked by *Brahma* and *Viṣṇu*. There are four cubical pillars dividing the temple into three equal parts. When Mr. Longhurst inspected these caves the pillars contained on the underside of the capitals, the roll ornament while the upper cubical sections of the front pillar, circular medallions filled with bas-relief ornament similar to those found at *Amaravati*. Those medallions as well as the sculptural detail on those have disappeared now and the pillar which was in a most decayed condition has been restored by the Archaeological Department.

The most attractive feature of this shrine is its ornamental facade. At either end of this facade are niches containing large size figures of *Dwārapāla* with lofty head dresses decorated with bull horns, standing akimbo, with one hand resting on the hip and holding a huge club with the other hand. These figures have also suffered badly due to the blasting operations and therefore very little of the facial features could be made out. The figure portrayed in the dormer windows or *chaitya* arches on the cornice are still well preserved. Above the cornice there is a frieze of animals lions with lashing tails attacking elephants

1. *Vijñāna Sarvasvamu, Telugu Samskriti* Part 3, p, 119 ff.

with uplifted tusks which is very interesting. More than all these, above the facade carved on the face of the rock is a huge representation of *Śiva* in his dancing pose. The image has four hands, and is trampling the *Apasmāra puruṣa* with one leg, probably in the attitude of *kālikā tāṇḍava*. Like most other sculptures, this has also suffered during blasting operations. Even by that time it was inspected by Mr. Longhurst the middle part of the figure was missing. Today nothing remains except the part of the leg on the dwarf demon.

The little that remains of these lofty edifices, speak volumes about the acme of perfection reached by the artist of that age in rock cut architecture and the pious zeal of the ruling dynasty that was mainly responsible for these creations.

APPENDIX IV

VIṢṆUKUṆḌIN COINS

In the course of my study and exploration tours particularly in the villages of Andhra, I was able to procure from villagers a number of stray coins and sometimes small hoards from private owners for purposes of study and publication. From the village of *Ādurru* in the East Godavari district ¹ I collected some copper coins with a lot of encrustations over them. Similarly from *Gurzāla* in the Palnad Taluk and *Amarāvati*, the famous seat of Buddhist *stūpa* in Guntur district I had also secured some coins. The *Gurzāla* hoard is an interesting collection of copper coins, the types of which were never studied by any scholar so far. Since I felt that these belonged to the *Viṣṇukuṇḍin* family, sixteen of these copper coins are being described and illustrated here.

These coins are invariably circular in shape measuring about $\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter and probably form one of the smaller series in ancient Indian coinage. The weight of these coins varies between 15 to 25 grains though a few of them also weigh 13 grains. This variation is probably due to wear and tear in circulation. The craftsmanship is somewhat crude and the depiction of symbols on all coins both on the obverse and as well as on the reverse is very poor. On a majority of these the delineation of the symbols is not quite clear and after cleaning the heavy encrustations very little has survived. On some of them one or two letters in *Brāhmi* script pertaining to the legend are discernible. Generally these coins seem to bear on the obverse standing but sometimes seated or couchant bull with a prominent hump, within a circle bearing a dotted border and on the reverse within a rayed circle three staff-like objects which appear to be similar to a *sūla* or *daṇḍa* flanked by two lamps with long and curved handles which are crossed horizontally by two short lines to indicate the mouldings near the top.

Similar coins have also been found at *Koṇḍāpur* ² and certain other places in Andhra Pradesh, but they have drawn little attention so far. One coin which is analogous to the present variety to some extent has been illustrated by Mr. Vincent Smith as a *Pallava* coin in his Oxford History of India.³ However no detailed description, or rendering of the

1. *Ādurru* is a small village in the Amalapuram Taluk, situated on the banks of *Vainatēya* branch of Godavari. This place is full of antiquarian remains and the ruins of a Buddhist *stūpa* partially explored and excavated by the author are very interesting.

2. In the course of excavations at Kondapur Sri Khwaja Ahmad of the Dept. of Arch. of Hyderabad found some coins of this type. They have been identified and illustrated in his report.

3. Oxford History of India. p. 207.

fragmentary legend on the coin has been attempted by that scholar. The coin has on the obverse a lion (?) with a twisted tail. The reverse shows a ghata (jar) flanked by two lamp-stands. We do not know as to why it has been regarded as a *Pallava* coin by Smith. He has not adduced any evidence in support of his identification. As far as the general features of these coins are concerned that can be classed as a sub-variety or the further development of the type under study.

Coins of the type under study are generally confined to the territory which was once ruled by *Viṣṇukunḍins*, and their provenance seems to lend support to their identification as the coinage of that dynasty. The bull and *sūla* symbols found on the coins indicate their *Śaivite* association. In this connection an examination of the representation of symbols on the seal Fig. 1 of the *Ipur* Plates of *Gōvindavarman*'s son *Mādhavavarman* seem to be quite relevant. Professor Hultzsh who edited that record, described that the seal is divided by a cross line into two sections; in the lower section the legend *Śrī Mādhavavarman* in two lines, is very faintly visible. Above the line there seems to be a figure of *Lakshmi* or a *Svastika* on a pedestal, flanked by the lamp-stands surrounded by the sun (?) and the crescent of the moon¹. A closer examination of the symbols on the seal however seem to suggest that the symbol is not of a seated *Lakshmi* or a *Svastika* but a double trident or *Nandipāda*. These symbols bear close resemblance to the symbols on the coins under study and are invariably attributes of *Śiva*.

Viṣṇukunḍins describe themselves in their inscriptions as the devotees of the Lord of *Śripārvata* (*Śripārvatasvāmi*) i.e. *Śiva* as *Mallikārjuna* at *Śrīsailam*. The few extant letters forming the marginal legend on these coins paleographically are datable to 5th - 6th century A.D. which is the time of *Viṣṇukunḍin* rule in Andhra and it is quite likely that letters which look like *ma* or *vi* occurring therein may perhaps form part of the legends containing the names of the kings *Mādhavavarman* and *Vikramēndra Varma*. However, in view of the absolutely fragmentary nature of the legend on these coins it is difficult to fix precisely their authenticity. This attribution cannot be confirmed unless some more dependable evidence is forth-coming, and therefore, whatever has been hazarded here is of a purely tentative character.

It is interesting to note that similar type of coinage was also issued by the *Chālukyas* also who were the political successors of *Viṣṇukunḍins* in their dominions. Smith² has published a coin resembling this type with the legend *Viṣamasiddhi* whom he identified with *Viṣamasiddhi Kubja Viṣṇuwardhana* of the *Chālukyas* of *Vēngi* (A.D. 615-33). But he describes the animal on the obverse as a crude lion, which may have to be taken as a bull.

1. Epi. Ind. Vol. XVII p. 134.

2. Epi Ind. Vol. XVII P. 134

3. Smith. Cat. of Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. Vol. I, (2906-Oxford) P. 322.

I have also discovered a coin almost identical in fabric like the coins under study bearing the legend in *Vēngi* characters reading “*Viṣamasiddhi*” at *Amarāvati*. It is not therefore quite unlikely that the *Chālukyas* might have reissued the same coinage as a mark of their victory over the *Viṣṇukundins* stamping their own name on that. This practice is not at all strange when viewed against the practice of the early south Indian rulers. *Gautamiputra* had restruck and issued *Nahapāna*’s coins¹ as a mark of his victory over the *Kṣātrapas* and annexation of their territories, the *Ikṣvākus* of *Śrīparvata Vijayapuri* appropriating the ‘Elephant Symbol’ of the later *Śātavāhanas* etc.

DESCRIPTION

1. WEIGHT 17 GRAINS

Obverse : Standing bull facing right. Two letters pertaining to the legend visible above the bull reading *Kra* and *ma*. Other letters very much defaced and illegible. The hind part of the bull and encircling border are also damaged.

Reverse : Lower half of the coin is somewhat blurred. The central staff (*danda* or *sūla*) and the lamp-stand on the right can be identified. Faint traces of rayed-circle along the lower-border.

2. WEIGHT 19 GRAINS

Obverse : Bull standing (?) with face portions faintly visible and the front part of the body mutilated. Surrounding circle almost clear. Traces of the indistinct letters (*ra* and *ba* or *ma*) above the bull are discernible.

Reverse : Central *sūla* slightly visible with lamp stand flanking on the right. Whole face badly damaged.

3. WEIGHT 18 GRAINS

Obverse : Couchant bull to the right with faintly visible legs particularly those of hinder part, inside a beaded circle which is complete.

Reverse : Rayed-circle covering 1/3 of the border. Central *sūla* visible clearly but depiction of the flanks has become somewhat indistinct.

4. WEIGHT 15 GRAINS

Obverse : Complete beaded circle, only very faint outline of the upper part of the humped-bull can be traced.

Reverse : Rayed circle on the side and the slightly flattened *sūla* in the centre

5. WEIGHT 20 GRAINS

Obverse : Very much mutilated. Only a faint outline of the body including hump can be traced. Tail completely damaged.

1. Rapson: Catalogue of Indian coins Andhra, W. *Kṣātrapas* etc. Introduction p. CXX - Jogalthambi hoard of coins of *Nahapāna* restruck by *Gautamiputra Śātākarni*. See also Rev. H. R. Scott, J.B.B.R.A.S. 1907.

Reverse : Except lightly struck central *sūla* and rayed-border on the side this face shows no traceable detail.

6. WEIGHT 19 GRAINS

Obverse : Except beaded border the details of the obverse are beyond recognition.

Reverse : Within rayed-circle *sūla* flanked by lamp stands with curved handle.

7. WEIGHT 19 GRAINS

Obverse : Bull standing to right, slightly blurred within beaded border.

Reverse : Traces of the rayed-border and central *sūla*.

8. WEIGHT 16 GRAINS

Obverse : Within beaded border can be traced bull standing to the right. Details almost damaged.

Reverse : Central *sūla* and few traces of border.

9. WEIGHT 23 GRAINS

Obverse : Bull standing to the right, hind part slightly damaged within beaded border.

Reverse : Almost blurred, only outline of the *sūla* is traceable.

10. WEIGHT 13 GRAINS

Obverse : Bull standing to the right faintly visible, except the hip portion.

Reverse : Blurred, *sūla* traceable.

11. WEIGHT 25 GRAINS

Obverse : Couchant bull, details not very clear within the border.

Reverse : Blurred, faintly traceable *sūla*.

12. WEIGHT 16 GRAINS

Obverse : Faintly visible bull facing to the right within beaded border.

Reverse : *Sūla* and its flanks somewhat blurred.

13. WEIGHT 15 GRAINS

Obverse : Totally blurred, only the hind portion of the body can be traced.

Reverse : Entirely blurred, only a portion of rayed border on the left is traceable.

14. WEIGHT 20 GRAINS

Obverse : Couchant bull, details clumsy, torso of the bull is traceable within the circle.

Reverse : *Sūla* flanks lightly visible. Rayed border on one side.

15. WEIGHT 16 GRAINS

Obverse : Within beaded border, bull facing to the right ; legs not clear. Indistinct traces of legend above the bull.

Reverse : *Sūla* and flanks, faintly visible.

16. WEIGHT 15 GRAINS

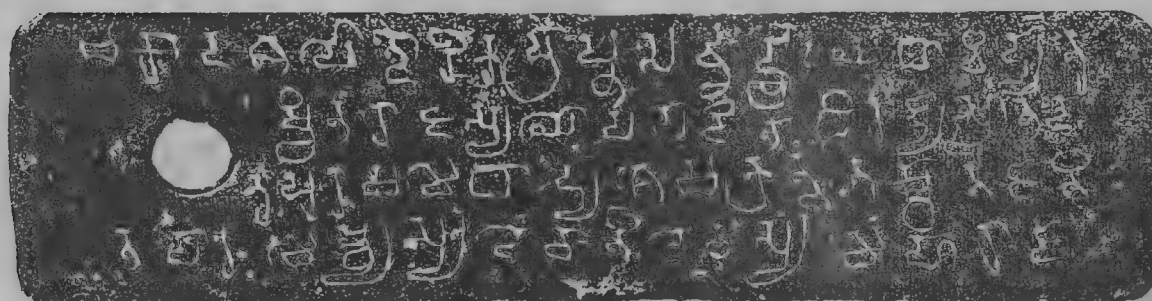
Obverse : Totally blurred details. Few traces of beaded border.

Reverse : Clearly distinct central *sūla*, flanks have grown slightly faint within rayed border.

First Plate: Second Side



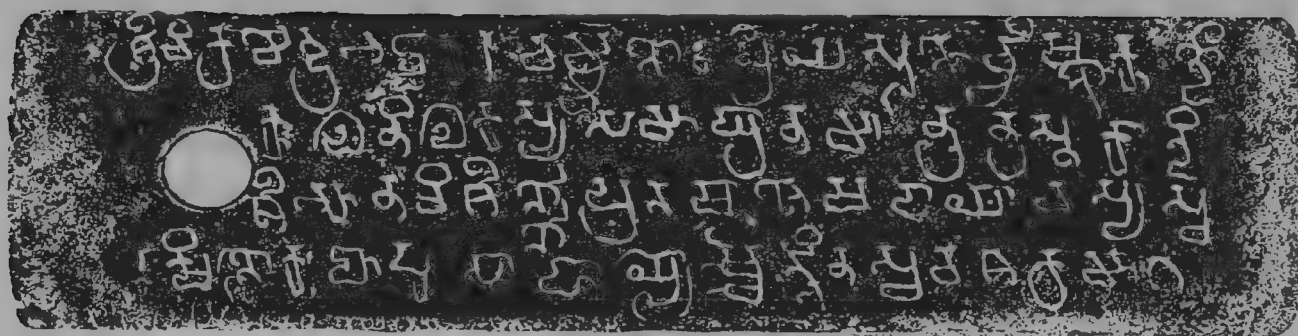
Second Plate: First Side



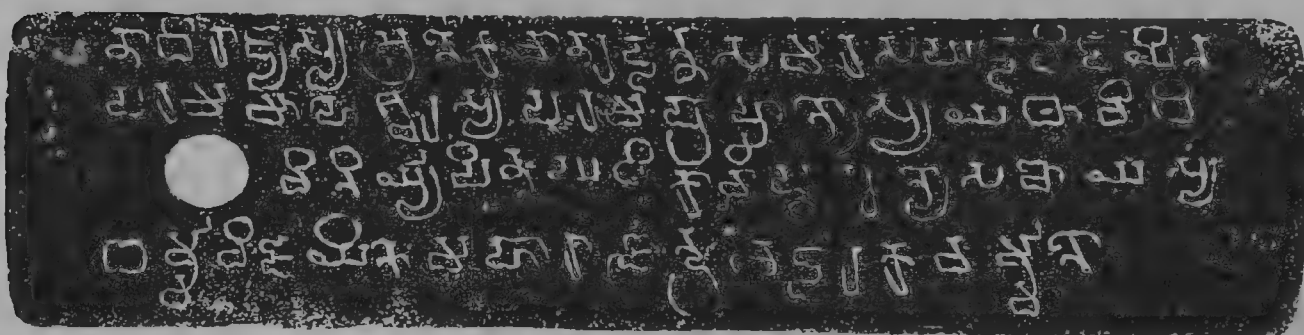
Second Plate: Second Side



Third Plate : First Side



Third Plate : Second Side



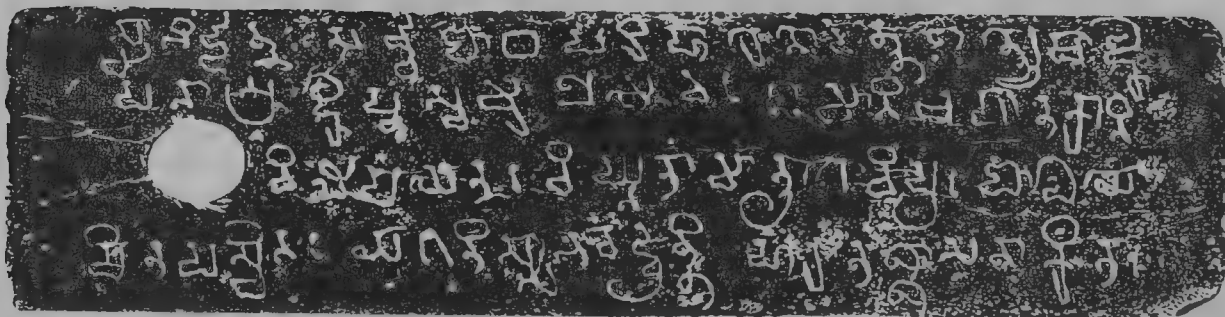
Fourth Plate : First Side



Fourth Plate : Second Side



Fifth Plate : First Side



Fifth Plate : Second Side

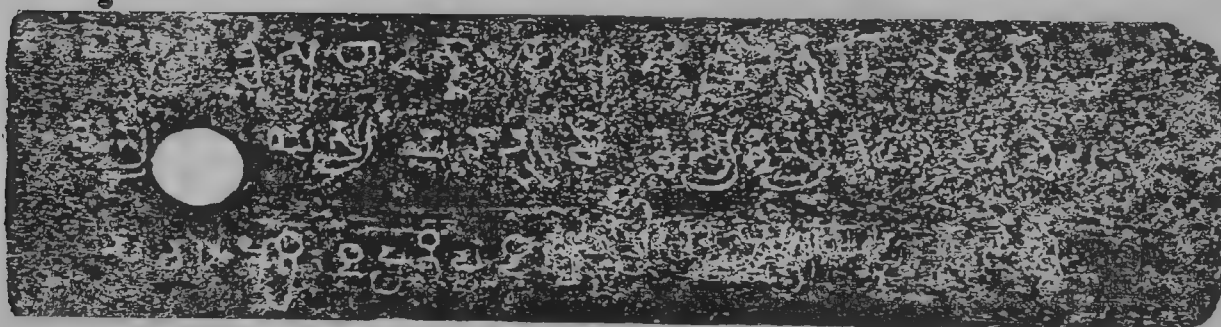


Figure A



Enlarged representation of the symbols on the Coin

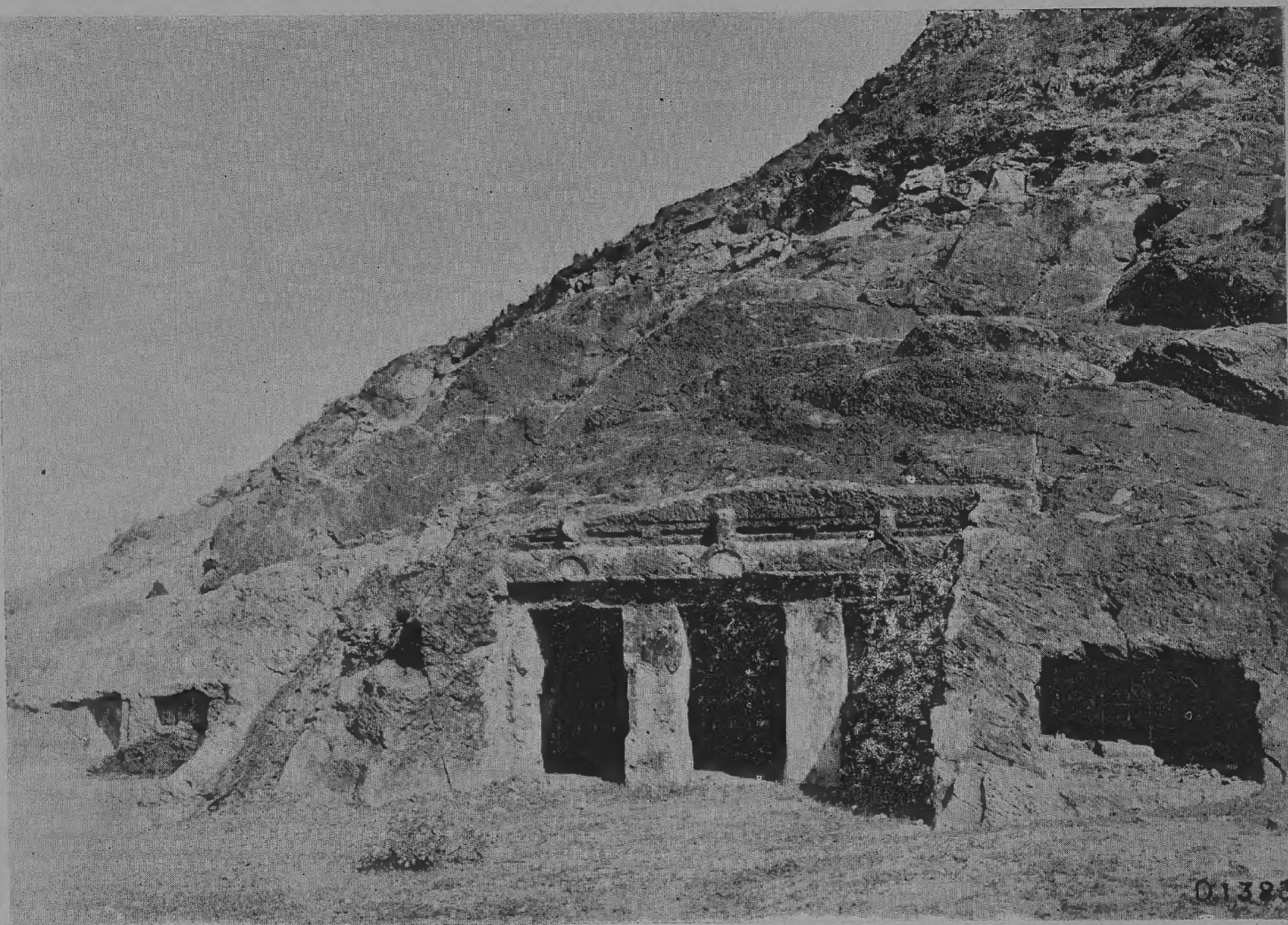
Figure B



Seal of *Madhavavarma*



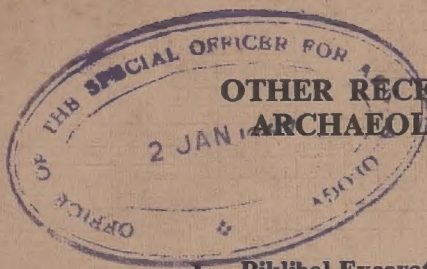
Triple shrined rock-cut Śiva Temple, Mogalrajapuram, Krishna Dt.



Rock-cut *Durga* Temple, *Mogalrajapuram*, Krishna Dt.



Viṣṇukunḍin Coins



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